A WHITE-PAPER GARDEN

SARA ANDREW SHAFER

SHOUT
SHARE
IT

A WHITE-PAPER GARDEN

"CARRY ME TOO"

A WHITE-PAPER GARDEN

BY

SARA ANDREW SHAFER

AUTHOR OF "THE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY,"
"BEYOND CHANCE OF CHANGE," ETC.

WITH FOUR PLATES IN COLOR, AND OTHER
ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY
FRANCES AND MARY ALLEN

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TO

EVERYONE

WHO EVER GAVE ME A FLOWER

2052049

FOREWORD

THE year has turned, and the divine stirrings which herald the resurrection of that body which, in our blindness and our pride, we are pleased to call the lower creation have begun. It will not be long before there will be about us a new heaven and a new earth, amid which the clouds, the cold and the shadows of to-day will be forgotten. A part of the coming glories will be brought to the dull ken of man, who fancies that the eternal forces work only for him, but a far, far greater part will be seen only by the eyes of the countless millions whom our ignorance and our arrogance declare to be without knowledge or understanding. Who knows? Is it true that "the soul sleeps in the stone, dreams in the animal, and wakes in the man"? And is

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APOLOGY

THE first sunbeam of the new year shone in on me through the year's first garden, giving me a foretaste of the beauty of all the gardens through which all the sunbeams of the year should pass.

In the night there had been a sudden lowering of the temperature. There had also been an escape of steam somewhere in the labyrinth of pipes netted through a great caravanserai in which many of the cliff-dwellers of these unhappy and unnatural days find shelter. Thus the frost found a chance to work his magic. Happily I do not care for what are known as window draperies, and I do care for the light which comes, fresh and unstained, with the dawning of each new day, and so, when I opened my eyes on New Year's morning, I saw, with the first grateful glance, what had been prepared for me.

With a breath of vapour, and on a pane of glass, the frost fairies had painted scenes that I held my heart to look at. Mountain ranges were there, with cliffs along which pointed firs marched in valiant phalanx. Valleys were there, down whose slopes rivers, fringed with willows and with reeds, flowed to vast oceans. Spars of ships at sea were there; islands crowned with palms; ruins of old temples; galaxies of stars and bars of light ineffable; fronds of ferns, and a thousand symbols for thoughts for which we have no words. All these were painted there, and blending the unheard music of their frozen harmonies with the far-off chimes of bells calling the faithful to prayer, I heard the voices of the winter-spirits whispering.

"We are of the most ancient guild of master craftsmen. Since Time has been we have spoken to men as we speak to you. Thousands of years ago we told our story; thousands of years hence we shall tell it again in these lines which were fashioned before Eternity began. We change, we fade, we die, in a changing, fading, dying world, but we come again, obedient, each tiniest crystal, to the ultimate Law."

As I looked at the frost garden, and listened to its voices, I thought of gardens I had known and loved before. Some of them are with the snows of yester year, some are so far away that I cannot even hope to see them with the eyes of flesh again. A great wave of desolation came over me as I thought of myself shut out from all the things I cared most for, shut in by all the things I most abhorred: a sparrow on a housetop, with not even a sparrow's heritage of a green bough to cling to.

Balzac had once such a desolation, such a longing, and this is how he overcame it. He made the roofs of Paris, spread out before his garret window, a playground for his imagination, a garden for his thoughts. There were the wet slates shining in the grey weather; there were the lights at night; there were the smoke-forests; there were the mosses, parched by sun, freshened by rain; there were the fogs; there were the skies, the stars and the dawn.

He had no more; had not I as much?

The "captive of an idea" I arose, my eyes wide with a great resolve.

I too would have a garden. My body might be imprisoned but my soul should be free. For what was my fancy given if it be not to override circumstance? Why should my memory so linger over every leaf and flower, every light and shade, every sound and movement of the beautiful world that once was mine, if out of its hoard I might not fashion a garden in which my thoughts might dwell? Why were my brain-cells stored with the words which those who have gone before me have said about the green world which they loved, if I may not set them forth where I can touch them at any hour, and point them out to others, if I please? Why, if I may not have sight of garden joys, may I not have faith that somewhere they exist; hope that some time they may be mine again, and love that shall carry me bravely through a whole year of imagined beauty?

I will have a garden! Reams of paper shall be my acreage, and pen and ink shall be my spade and trowel. Never a blight shall fall on my flowers, nor shall they suffer an unwelcome rain, or an untimely frost. It shall be here to-day, and there to-morrow: an old pleasaunce which I remember, in one hour, and in the next, a new realm untrodden by the foot of man. If I choose, the whole landscape shall be my garden, or it may be an orchard, or a field of clover, of bending wheat. If I like, it shall be a marsh, hot in the sunshine, and full of strange bog-growths, or it shall be a forest, vast and dim and inscrutable. Perhaps it will narrow down to the shadow cast by a pot of ferns on a window ledge, or to the fairy graces of a saucerful of bluets. The garden that might serve for the days when the fair maids of February walk through the snows ringing their green and silver bells may well be too small to content me when roses bloom. But what of that?

The Indians divided their year into moons, calling each by a word full of meaning. Moons will divide my garden also, since moons reign when dreams are abroad.

There are fields in dreamland which I may annex without the fear of the curse which protects my neighbour's landmark. There are cloudy hillsides which I can see from my window, to which no one has a better right than I. My seeds and roots shall be the things I remember; my flowers and fruits the words which others have spoken, by voice, or pen, or brush. Little vistas shall open into unsuspected and unrelated regions, and there shall be deep breathings whose coming and going I can neither command nor control. In the paths wherein I shall walk, fine spirits, who have already learned the secrets of peace, shall walk also. In the orchards I shall be a child again ; in the uplands I shall spend my prime, and in the shadowy alleys I shall find what balm there may be for sorrow. There again I shall meet the friends whom I have hailed on my journey. There again I shall listen to dear voices which have passed on into silence. There I shall sing, unabashed, bits of song that may come to me—there I shall laugh ; there I shall weep. Winter and summer, fall and spring, I will make a part of each day sacred by dwelling apart in these gardens which I may not touch or handle, but which are mine by every right of the spirit, and in my white-paper garden I will disclose somewhat of what all gardens should be, even were they not, haply, all of the stuff that dreams are made of.

"By a garden is meant, mystically, a place of spiritual repose, stillness, peace, refreshment, delight."—JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

"If beauty, absent and dreamed of, does not affect you more than beauty present, you may have a thousand gifts, but not that of imagination."—VICTOR COUSIN

JANUARY

The blue sky bends in a solemn bow
Over a world of stainless snow.
In chill, brown lines, the hedges creep
Past sheltered farms to forests deep.
The steel-blue ice, wind-swept and clear,
Covers the breast of the lonely mere.
In cedar thickets blue jays scold,
While snow birds whirl through the bitter cold.
  A tiny, timid, hasty print
  On white drift gives of hares a hint !

A WINTER MORNING

A
WHITE-PAPER GARDEN

JANUARY

THE SNOWY MOON

JANUARYS, thank God! come every year, and every one of them has thirty-one days which are of a shortness, and are almost sure to be of a snowiness and a coldness which distinguish them from even December days or from those that belong to February. January sunshine brings us an experience that is all its own, and never else-time may such sunsets be seen.

Taking these things separately or together, it is at once obvious that January is a most propitious garden-month, with gifts which it were both sin and folly to ignore.

"Live they not against nature that in the winter ask for a rose, and by the nourishment of warm waters, and the fit change in the heat in winter-time cause a lily or a spring flower to bloom?" If in the days of Seneca this were wisdom—why not in ours? January will give us more than we dare ask, in a hemlock bough strung with little shining brown cones, and powdered with snow. Why should we care for a midwinter rose? A poor perverted thing it needs must be, no matter how long its stem, nor how thick its petals. Born in a stifling atmosphere, shut out from the skies and the winds by a roof of glass, with never a bee to give it greeting, what can it know of rosehood? Better by far a brave spray of barberries holding their colour against the cold.

In the north I would have my garden, and as this is not a time for petty things, but for big ones and bold, let it be painted into the landscape with wide washes of the tints that belong to the season. Tints, not colours, save for the heavy blackness of the evergreens, since winter means reserve, and withdrawal, and grey and white silences. No one is ever intimate with Winter. Even the children, who pile fortresses of his snow, and riot in the deep drifts with all the joyous *abandon* of young animals, know that only thus far can they go—and that beyond the line which lies but a step farther than the threshold of their desire, the hush of death is waiting.

A winter garden ought to begin with rounded purple masses of woodlands, skirting a low range of hills. In the sunshine of a midwinter day they will melt and lift, like faint mists, giving promise of ever-widening horizons, and will offer to us that elusive beckoning onward which is the best of gardening, as it is the best of life. Through wide planes of air, they will darken as stormy weather approaches, and by their white effacement they will announce the coming of snow. The eyes should be led thitherward by dark lines of field-defining hedges—or by stone walls—not too well kept, which guard the sacred earth in which the new year's bread is asleep in the young wheat. Chance trees, elms, red oaks, wild cherries, or close-breasted cedars must group themselves about in the unhusbanded corners of fields; above stone piles, and along the brooks that sing under the ice. Orderly battalions of cedars must march along the roads leading towards the village, keeping sentry over the tentlike stooks which bring the crows cawing from their distant pines.

Of all the birds that fly I love the crows most dearly. Their slow cries mingled with the half-sleeping, half-waking dreams of dawn, and their strong wings measure off the sky-gold of sunset with a beauty and system which gives them a right to be called the chief of our winter birds. Others come and go—or they are too small or too few to impress themselves upon the largeness of the out-of-door world but the crows may always be depended upon to give the landscape the sharp accent of their black wings, and the note of mastery in their undaunted voices.

If we would have crows always, and blackbirds later and blue jays when the gay spirit that rules them pleases, we must plant pines. Even in an estate encompassing a castle in Spain there could never be pines enough, and were I the owner of Aladdin's lamp I would endow whole landscapes with the glory of rows and clusters and avenues and forests of these royal trees. Nothing so lends distinction to country life as the possession of pines. A splendid mansion doubles its dignity by an approach guarded by these lordly conifers, and the simplest farmhouse loses all vulgarity or sordidness when it is sheltered by them. A home so adorned and comforted reminds one of a beautiful woman robed in costly furs, who does not defy cold by her wrappings, because they have rendered her unconscious that cold exists, and who diffuses a sense of warmth and opulence by her presence. The pioneer of the older states planted these trees by the tens of thousands, and more than one American family points with more pride to the ancestral pines than to the cross which was the guerdon-right of a crusader on the unused coat-of-arms which lies, half-forgotten, in the desk in the old farmhouse under the sighing trees. All pines are noble, but the tree of which Emerson said unforgetable things was assuredly that of which the masts of ships are made, and if the fable of Daphne has in it that saving grace of truth which lies deep in the heart of all folk-tales, and if every human soul has its counterpart in the soul of some lifeful green thing, then must the pure and austere spirits of the men and women who have made our republic look out on us from between the pine boughs when the moonbeams find their way between the singing leaves, and throw their blue-black shadows on the snow.

An old pine is best seen when it is grown about by younglings of many stages of growth, from the feathery whorls of the babies in their first summer to the young giants rejoicing in the strength of their youth. The pinetum ought not to be a thing of to-day nor of to-morrow, but of always. Deep — oh! deep within the human heart lies a longing for permanence. Soul calls to soul for pause, and as we hurry through the little day that lies between the eternities, with what passionate desire do we cry out to those who have gone on into whatever lies before; and with what piteous futility do we try to be remembered, if only by a single kindly thought, by those who are to follow us! We cannot stay—that we know full well—but some of the things it pleases us to call our own, may live a little longer than ourselves, and so, young and old together, the pines should grow. The little ones are to be loved and nourished as one loves a young child, but the old ones are to be cared for and honoured as one cares for the beautiful old people whom the aged pines resemble. Buffeted by winds, pruned by storm, scarred by lightnings, it may be, or worn by neglect or cruelty, how full of meaning the pines become! No tree, unless it may be an oak, becomes as human as does a pine which has lived for generations in the intimate companionship of man. When the trunks have grown grey and resinous, and the boughs are mute witnesses to the struggles of the soul of the tree, they take on the same beauty which shines in the faces of men and women who have grown old in the quest of high ideals, and in the service of noble endeavours. They know so much, the ancient trees, whose breath is for the healing of the nations, that when the wind, who is the oldest of the master musicians, begins his hymnings among the dark leafage, there is no mood of the soul which may not find therein an interpretative melody, and no sorrow of the heart to which they refuse to bring a message of peace.

Against a stockade of pines it were well to plant in, irregularly, other cone-bearers—spruce firs, cedars, *arbor vitæ*, hemlocks, junipers. The blessed conifers! Through how many ages they have striven to adapt themselves to their environment! How tenderly they hold their soft burden of snow! How cheerfully they shelter the birds from the storms! If you chance to see the delicate embroideries the feet of a covey of partridges print upon the white drifts, follow it, and it will be almost sure to lead you to a thicket of hemlocks. There you will find also, uncertain, shy, nut-hatches and juncoes—compact, cold-defying little scraps of life, whose tiny "cheep" or crisp interrogatory call to their fellows is all the conversation the busy things have time to toss to and fro in the frosty air, so earnest is the warfare they wage against the eggs and larvæ hidden under the bark. What an evil it would be if they would decide to become migratory birds, or take it into their heads to wish to know what a palm-tree looks like! The jays, those gay, blue-mailed freebooters, haunt the evergreens, and bid defiance to the cold in harsh cries that are of a courage so high as to put a bit of their bravery into the faintest heart. Once in a way a flock of ruby-crested knights may search among the spruce buds for their dinner, and it may be a pine's good fortune to become host to an owl or two, whose wide, soft flight through the wintry dusk will be a thing to remember.

Near the evergreens I would plant as many birches as I could find foothold for—white, grey, brown, shining, clustering, growing singly. How the trunks take for themselves the tints of the snow, the earth and the rocks! How the branches symbolise the inconstant winds with the thoughtful movement of their delicate traceries. No other tree gives quite the idea of purity that belongs to a white birch. If I were a painter and wished to paint the perfect flower of womanhood in Our Lady's face, I would place her in the shadow of white birches. Their slender swaying branches would shield the head of the little Child upon her knee, and He would try to catch the flickering beams of the sun which fell between them with the hands that were to be held out in love to all the world.

A beech shall grow in one corner of my garden, the corner I shall call my sound garden. Why not? The ear has as good a right to be thought of as have those pampered members of the body—the eyes and the nose. A perfectly trained ear knows by the sound of the wind in the branches of the tree under which it is passing what sort of tree it is. Harsh, some of these sounds will be ; delicately vibrant others ; mournful others, and cheery yet others. There are oaks which are types of village gossips, so full is their persistent foliage of whisperings and insinuations. There are beeches which rustle through the winter with the silken *frou-frou* of great court ladies, and there are dry, sarcastic, unfallen leafings which hurt like the smile of a cynic. In some strong-caned bushes one hears the voices of the builders of great commonwealths, and in the creakings of certain assertive growths the materialism of this age has long been foreboded. The catalpas rattle their long castanets ; the locusts clash their pods in unison with the beating of the invisible drums for which the balls of the sycamores are for ever ready. Through long grasses and sedges poets and musicians sing to us, and in the contented rustle of the corn the great dear, commonplace, indispensable common people tell of their joys and sorrows, and speak without boasting of humble duties faithfully performed. Briars and brambles send messages by a code far older than Morse's, and in the mighty race of the cone bearers, fugues and chorales, concertos and symphonies are for ever sounding, while to the Spirit of Winter the whole vast orchestra ministers.

For January, as for all the months of the year, I should like to plant a seed garden. It would be hedged in by a thicket of blackberries, over whose strong lattices the Virgin's bower would weave a cloudy thatch. Chickadees always know where to find the feathery grey seed clusters, and as I should listen to their chatter over their breakfast I should look —always in vain—among the smoky puffs of seeding for a single spray which lacked one line of that grace which is the birthright of the clematis. Cat-briars would climb the thorn-trees which would grow on the outer boundaries of the plot, since no berries can be handsomer by contrast with the scarlet haws than are the heavy blue-black clusters of their fruits. I may not call the bittersweet a weed, yet it shares with weeds the care-free joys of sauntering along the highways as nonchalantly as any gypsy, and reddens its cheek against the wind as cheerfully as any vagabond who ever deserted a humdrum rooftree for the open road. Somewhere there must be elderberries, frozen but sweet, and frost grapes, and there must be plenty of dog roses, and some spindle-trees. I like this last, pretty, homespun name almost as well as I like their pretty tricorned fruit-cups. The Indians called it *wahoo*, a shivery, owl-like sound that goes well with the frosty air. There must be sumachs somewhere in this goodly fellowship of light-o'-hearts, and a spice bush must offer its aromatic twigs to the nibbler who alone is the true out-of-door man; and above all coral-berried dogwoods must find place here, where so many friendless folk are merry and helpful together.

Those for a background, and against them I would plant in all of the bescorned sisterhood of weeds. All the long summer they were quietly and patiently gathering strength: all the long autumn they were making the most of rain and sunshine and sweet earth foods, and now that the starving time has come to the little birds, who have no barns, these granaries are open to a horde of pensioners. Every puff of wind shakes down the flat seeds of the umbels, and every hour the brown weights that act as rudders to the parachutes of the great family of the composites grow sweeter and sweeter. Thistles stand out in angles that only an artist of old Japan could understand. Queen Anne's lace throws shadows which no one but Bonvin could interpret. Asters, goldenrod, Jor-pye-reed, grasses, sedges, yarrow mallows, and even jimpson and plantain, mullein and burdock and pig-weed have a value now. Men never plant these things. They even cut down those which have planted themselves, and pride themselves upon the performance of an act of civic virtue when the weed pile vanishes in a flash of fire and a puff of smoke. It may be that they are right, and perhaps I would do it myself if I had the next year's grains to look after; but here, in this spot dedicated to St Francis of Assisi, the weeds shall stand forth in all the beauty of loving service, offering their bounty to the birds in a right true brotherliness good to see and good to share.

There is but one flower for the Garden of the Month of the Cold Moon, and that is the Christmas rose, or hellebore. In seedsmen's lists it is mainly conspicuous by its absence, and it really belongs only in gardens where Tradition loves to gather her treasures about her. Protected by the leathery curtains of its strong leaves, the pink buds begin to show themselves in November. Persisting through the most discouraging frosts and rains, the blossoms unfold about Yuletide. White, as becomes a snow-flower; with a heart of pale gold stamens, and a flush as of dawn, the flowers are as beautiful as if May winds had blown their petals apart. True children of the cold, they must be left in the open, since they pine and blacken in captive air.

The whole garden is incomplete unless there be snow—the soft, light snow, the swarming white bees! everywhere, and bends every bough and covers everything with its pure mantle. Then when the sun shines as it loves to shine, when the cold has freed the air from dampness, when the frost flowers lie light and sparkling, when blue and mournful shadows are cast by every grass blade, as well as by every tree bole, then is there a garden so spiritual that our eyes are unworthy to behold it, and our souls stand abashed before such a revelation of holiness.

There is one supreme hour in the snow world, and that is when twilight settles down, chill, still. Trees are etherealised, distances vanish. One by one the colours die out of the west: one by one in the far, cold sky the stars come out, each attentive to "God's calling the bede-roll of the little stars, and each answering, 'Here am I!'" What majesty, what solemnity, what awful beauty, in these glories of the most ancient of all gardens! As they deepen and brighten and grow, and the cold strengthens, perhaps the air will be fanned for a moment by the wide wing of a snowy owl; perhaps the white burden of snow will shiver down from some evergreen bough on which a restless jay has found shelter; perhaps there will be a fairy tinkling of

> "Icicles
> Quietly shining to the quiet moon."

So many things may happen in a January garden!

FEBRUARY

The laggard sun, on frosty morn
Throws level beams through stubble corn.
Against the sunset, naked trees
Weave magic bredes and traceries.
From woodman's axe white splinters bound ;
The flicker's cheery tappings sound ;
Ice thaws, and in the quickening flood
Are vague, fond hopes of leaf and bud ;
    When lo ! like fleck of living sky,
    Full-songed, a blue bird sweet flits by !

A WINTER POOL

FEBRUARY

THE SNOWY MOON

ALTHOUGH it is February, I would not leave town if I could. It is the one month in which the most enthusiastic gardener is as well off here as elsewhere, and the friendly streets and sheltering walls are no bad substitute for melting snowfields and sudden, revolutionary conditions of the mercury, which, one hour giving a hint of spring, in the next bids us think of the Glacial Period—and our steps. February is certainly the ugly duckling of the year's brood, and nobody cares much for his company. Everybody gives him a peck and an ill word, and everybody grudges him even the eight-and-twenty days given him by the calendar men, and considers himself insulted when

"Leap year makes it twenty-nine."

It is a time for books and for plans. Books may be read anywhere, our plans may be made as satisfactorily in walled cities as in sodden orchards or on spongy lawns—better, perhaps, because there we miss the discouragement of actual contact with the unlovely disintegrations that are all too evident in St Valentine's weather! Perhaps it was for plan-making that Februarys are made, after all! They are near enough to the beginning of things to encourage a free outlook, and not too far from other things to let us forget the failures and successes, the disappointments and achievements of the past. A gardener is, as Alfred Austin reminds us, a true Dogberry, "a man that hath had losses." He is also one who has known "the purest of human pleasures," and so he stands in the waxing strength of the February sunlight, remembering the things he promised himself not to forget, but which he *will* forget when he sees the first daffodil, and it is already too late to say, "This year thus and so shall be done."

I write my name large in the list of those who most gratefully acknowledge their debt to writers of books. I—— No! I renounce the difficult joy it would be to try to say what I owe to the printed page, and I hasten on to say that in February there is but one kind of reading that wholly delights me, and that is the reading of catalogues: plant and seed, and fruit and bulb, catalogues. Herbals, botanies, manuals—garden-books in general—these are for all the year. In this month I care only for the lists of things men who deal in living plants have to sell. Because my name is found only in the most modest corner of their order-book—since air-gardening is not a costly pursuit, and all I ever buy is an occasional packet of seeds for some friend who owns a leasehold of more tangible soil than mine—I am obliged to send shamefaced postcards, or deceitful notes enclosing stamps, to the men whose advertisements are the crowning delight of the monthly magazines. I cannot buy their wares, I know, but, as it is better to give than to receive, it is only a kindness to them to enable them to place at least one of their pamphlets where it will do the most good—to the recipient if not to the sender. Moreover, it would not be polite to refuse a courtesy, and they beg so prettily for our names and addresses that it would be a rudeness to refuse them.

In a few days I begin to watch for the postman, and never watch I in vain. The kind growers make all haste to disseminate pleasures, and in a trice my desk is covered with the most fascinating of all forms of literature. Then I shut the door, and invite my soul to a lordly feast. It is nothing to me that the skies are heavy and grey. I do not care if the fog steals up from the river and, with white, baleful fingers, presses against the pane. I take no thought of Candlemas shadows which others fear. I am at the gates of a paradise from which no angel, flaming sworded, bars, but which all may enter if they will but have a key.

Tables and chairs are soon over-littered with the charming sheets which come from everywhere, and by every post. Of late there has crept into these a habit of illustrating their text by photographic reproductions of actual flowers, a practice I cannot too rigidly contemn. If the florist must go into court, and hold up his right hand, and solemnly swear that thus and not otherwise grew his campanulas and his foxgloves, where are we to look for the old delight that lay in the woodcuts of asters that were as big as chrysanthemums, and chrysanthemums that had the diameter of a dinner-plate? Compare a list of to-day with one of even half-a-dozen years ago—can there be such deterioration in plants? And is there to be no more that keen stimulant given to one's imagination which the old catalogues offer? One is indeed far gone in worldly wisdom when he no longer pins his faith to those profuse and mammoth flowerings, and when he once begins to distrust the colourings set forth on the covers he is a lost man. Let the photographer turn his lenses on the looking-pleasant faces of his clients, and leave the picturing of garden things to the freer brush and pencil of the gardener's choice.

A real gardener is, as all the world knows, a most honest man. One thinks of him, instinctively, as going to church on Sunday, his wife by his side, and a rosy tale of little offshoots following happily behind. There is a clove-pink in the buttonhole of his best coat, and a sprig of citronella decorates the family hymn-book. One allows him a glass of something-and-water, now and then, to keep out the damp, but for generosity—within discreet bounds—for truthfulness—except under great provocation and for open-mindedness,—except on subjects on which he knows that his opinions cannot be bettered,—a gardener is an honest man. It is because of our faith in him that we accept this picture of a rose-bush whereon petal touches petal from root to crown ; that we believe in this bed of pansies, whereof no leaf shows, but only a sheet of wide-eyed blossoms, and that we are eager to credit this bank of forget-me-nots with florets as large as sixpences. In our hearts we know that such roses and pansies are not, and that such forget-me-nots will never be. Yet year by year we linger over those enchanting woodcuts with an interest more perennial than any perennial whose virtues they celebrate.

From the table beside which I sit, I put away everything but an ink bottle, a pen, a pencil—red at one end and blue at the other—a foot-rule, and some sheets of paper. I make believe, to use the happy phrase of childhood, that the foot-rule is a tape-reel hundreds of feet long, but, as one must accommodate one's desires to one's environment at times, the foot-rule answers very well as an ordinary surveying outfit. Where I need to mark a circle for a place for a sundial I make a very good one by drawing a line around the cork of the ink bottle. Thus equipped I am ready to begin my plans and my lists.

I do not think it could be possible for a garden to have too much box. On the contrary, I am sure that it could never have enough of that imperishable shrub which inhales the present by its millions of lungs, and breathes forth a past of inconceivable antiquity in its sighs. Dr Holmes fancied that we have brought with us from some antecedent life some subtle relationship with this shrub, which comes back to us with every inhalation of its unforgetable scent. A thorough democrat, because of its thorough aristocracy, I do not know anything which grows so capable of that which we call friendship. The most intimate secrets may safely be told it, the safest counsel comes from it, and summer and winter there is healing in its breath. It is the most natural shelter and playfellow for children; it is the fittest confidant for dreaming youth. In the book of remembrance over which men pore more and more fondly as years go by, it borders the dearest pages, and it is the one thing to hold in the hand at the last. It should stand for immortality in the language of the flowers since in its vast life, man is but an incident, and it is easy to believe that when the last rays of the dying sun shall shine on the masterless jewels which have been the pride of a hundred forgotten kings, the box will catch the last gift of its light upon its rounded leaves, and then will pass into the final darkness without fear.

In my garden, therefore, will I have long hedges of the precious box leading in every direction from the dial, which is the garden's heart, to the windbreak, which is even more needful in February's uncertain thaws and freezes than it was in the steady, solemn cold of its forerunner. It is a hemlock shelter now and feathers down toward the grass, in a wide planting in of rhododendron and laurel, with some mats of savin or juniper and here and there a small cedar. In nature there are few abrupt transitions from tree to grass. There is almost always a blending of boughs and blades through the friendly air of shrubby growths and tall plants. Sometimes the effect of many tall bare trunks is too precious to be lost, as one sees it in the coast pines, but far more often is the beauty of those most beautiful of all trunks, the beech boles and the stems of birches, greater if veiled by a foreground of green. Box is not hospitable to close neighbours, but away from it a bit, where the dogwoods have tipped the foils with which it fights the cold with the round buttons which are to conquer the whole world by-and-by, the smaller evergreens must be set, so that the ground be covered by them. The English ivy makes an unexcelled carpet. It will grow thus even in the most inhospitable climates, if the stock be taken from plants already adjusted to the surroundings. The common myrtle is exceedingly hardy and, once entrenched, will grow and prosper and ripen with the years until its richness becomes proverbial. Thyme is another winter carpet well worth everybody's while to plant, so readily does it grow, so dense is its green and bronzed foliage and so homelike is its scent. The most beautiful of our native evergreen trailers or creepers, the lycopodium and the exquisite partridge-berry, refuse domestication.

I put down the foot-rule, and the cork of the ink bottle. The sheet of paper is filled with radiating and connecting lines marked "box" and curly little rosettelike marks surrounding figures. Corresponding figures in the footnotes indicate the names of the trees and shrubs which are to occupy these positions in my garden—hemlock, dogwood, rhododendron, laurel, juniper, savin, cedar, myrtle, ivy, thyme; it is such a short list, and there is such a worldful of things to choose from!

I take up my pencil—the red and blue one—and I begin on a fresh sheet of paper the list of seeds which I would buy if I had wherewith to buy, and wherein to sow. List-making is a serious matter, even if one uses the blue end of the pencil to check off the things one must have, and the red end for the things one can do without. All choice is serious, since life is only a series of acceptances and rejections, and either may be endless in its consequences.

The lists vary with the weather. A sunny day? Oh, then by all means let me prepare a retreat full of cool white and green things against the summer heats! Clouds, and a low sobbing wind? Let me have only yellow, sunshiny flowers in my books, with many, many light-hearted pansies, and with plenty of fragrant leaves. On some nights I will have only perennials; on some days I turn from all old friends and care only for those marked "novelties"; but these are the restless days in which I have gotten into the strange electric currents that threaten the old, evolved peace in which happiness dwells. The pencil-marks shame me when the ill mood has passed, and my heart has again found anchorage in the still waters beside which the flowers of my youth are growing. Sometimes, in sheer despair of making a list to which I can ever hope to write "the end," I decide to proceed in the orthodox, alphabetical manner. I did so yesterday, and I got no farther than the word Adlumia.

So it stands on the seedsmen's lists. I hope I need not again write down a Latin or a Latinised name. They have their uses, and "express the plant's standing in the scientific world, as its common name reveals its relation to humanity." There is always a bit of the life of the plant itself in its common name, its home, its private story, its affiliation with rock or water, its suggestion of bird or beast, its healing graces. It is touched, thus, by man's religion, by his superstition, by his loves,—not often by his hates. Poetry lurks in every letter that helps to spell out the names of the oldest favourites. A rose would most certainly not be as sweet by another name, and if the daffodil were robbed of one syllable of the name that looks like its upspringing, slender leaves, and sounds like the music of its pale trumpets, it would not be the daffodil that I love.

So, because I have lists headed "Creepers, trailers and climbers," "Biennials," and "Old friends," and because at the head of each stands this unlovely word—which I have just crossed out, and for which I have substituted "Alleghany vine," and "Mountain fringe"—I sat with poised pencil, and wondered why this particular little plant should have been registered in so many places, and as I wondered I began to dream dreams, and to see visions.

Once upon a time, in the country that lies Back of Beyond, there stood a farmhouse. Pine-trees stood about it chanting perpetually that battle hymn of the republic of trees in which they bid defiance to all the winds that blow, and fling down a gage to all the powers of frost, and cold, and quick-spent lightning. Or else, in summer twilights, and in silvery April dawns, they sang a love-song as old as the eternities and as vast as space. Back of the farmhouse lay an orchard: rose-white in April, pearl-white in May, green in midsummer, golden and crimson and russet at the fall of the leaf, and grey and brown in winter. Through it the seasons came and went in orderly procession. Children played in it. Thrushes sang there in the starlit dusks, and a gentle old man with white hair walked there in the sunshine of the afternoons. The winds came sweet and pure across the fields to rustle the curtain that overhung the farmhouse door. Such a curtain! The gracious, wandering sprays of which it was woven were like green frostwork; the pink-white clusters of its odd little pendent flowers were not flowers at all, but quaintest fairy garments hung out to dry after the rain that had silvered the leaves, and oh! the exquisite roundness and blackness and shiningness of the tiny seeds! To gather and gather them was one of the joys of the childhood that threw them away after the moment's possession which sufficed even for things so beautiful and so precious. Have I not given good and sufficient reasons why the Alleghany vines cannot be left out? Is there not a memory like this behind the name of every flower that grows, and when the midnight has turned toward morning, and the rain is falling, does not the homesick heart cry out for the loved ones at home?

Down goes the list and out comes the foot-rule. When I was laying out my box borders I forgot to put in a privet hedge. There is nothing prettier than the sturdy privet, which carries its clean, dark leaves well into the winter and, after its pearly flowers in mid summer, jets itself over with shining black berries. I must plant privet across the lower end of my paper or—stay—shall I not have a cherry-tree at either corner, which will grow bigger and bonnier as the years go by, and between them a strong netting for sweetpeas and colza, and moon vine and morning glory? Or would it not be better to build in a lattice for sweetbriar and eglantine, and prairie queen and Baltimore belles, and for clematis, and starry honeysuckle, and all the healthy, hardy things that would love to climb over it or lean against it? Yes, I will have the lattice, and the sweetpeas can grow on a netting somewhere else.

The foot-rule goes into the drawer. The lattice may be any length I choose, so there is no need to measure it off.

I count myself in few things else so happy as that even on a seedman's list of flowers I can read the whole story of my life. Thoreau says that there is a flower for every mood of the mind, and it has long been an article of faith with me that the history of any country-bred heart can be told by the flowers he loves best. A child cares most for the things that are nearest at hand. With the minted gold of the dandelions, and the measureless wealth of daisies and buttercups he fills his hands and his heart with happiness and splendour. Later, while still unspotted by the world, he cares for those which he can bend to the new uses which life is every day discovering to him, and he enters into that poetic relation with the Over Soul which is expressed in the flower games, world old, but new to every generation of men and of things. He fights violet battles; he has snowball wars. He gives balls at which the guests come freshly and beautifully dressed from the rows of hollyhocks, and from the beds of balsams, and are feasted at tables spread with cups cut from rose hips filled with wine turned from water, and held in bottles made by patient manipulations of the thin outer membranes of the leaves of live-for-ever, and plates which were acorn cups, and handsomely set out with mallow cheeses. Larkspurs come into value when it is discovered that their honey-horns may be removed and strung together into the wreaths which are found, sometimes, in after years, and in alien places, among the leaves of forgotten books.

Phlox grows because of its great value as necklace and bracelet making material: ornaments so necessary in the personal adornment of the actresses in the dramas so easily arranged if one have but a bit of sunlit turf for a stage, and a lilac bush by way of withdrawing-room. A thousand industries keep the child busy in the summer garden, alive with elves and fairies, and full of enchanted castles, with moat and drawbridge all complete, and the relations there established between him and the infinite heart of Nature will be eternal. I should not like to think of children and fairies and gardens, and leave unquoted these verses from one of the Kate Greenaway books :

> "Beneath the lilies, tall, white garden lilies,
> A princess slept her charmèd life away,
> For ever were the fairy bluebells ringing,
> For ever through the night and through the day:
>
> "When lo ! a prince came riding through the sunshine !
> The wind just touched the lilies, to and fro,
> And woke the princess, while the bluebell music
> Kept ringing, ringing, sleepily and low."

As childhood gives way before the mysterious disturbances of larger growth, other flowers become dear. Cowslips give place to pansies, and daisies to violets. Flower-beds are too small to hold all the sweetpeas and mignonette one ought to have, and the longest hours are too short for the converse one would like to hold with the lily-of-the-valley. Then come roses, only roses, and it is a part of the rainbow gold that gilds all our morning thoughts, and lures us on to hopes of high achievement, that our roses must be large and splendid, heavy with odour and rich with colour. We may have our days when the tea rose is all-in-all to us; and we may have moods in which the appeal comes from the gorgeous hybrids, but it is always the big, triumphant roses for which we care. Later we come to an appreciation of the simpler flowers, the pink-and-white cabbage roses, the hardy little Scotch roses, or the sweetbriar, and at last we arrive at the rose of a hundred leaves, and then we know that we have reached the top of the hill.

We do not lay aside any of our old loves even then. They are a part of ourselves, and we could as easily change the colour of our eyes as our loyalty to those tried friends, but henceforth we add others slowly to our affections, and these are chosen frankly because of their wearing qualities. Asters come in for a great share of our favour, and hardy phlox, and even dahlias, and zinnias, and always chrysanthemums. In a world where life is a vain and fleeting show—as saith the old hymn—and all passes like a dream, we come to hold fast by the sturdier friends who can stay with us for a longer time than the rose's little day, or for the brief glory of the iris, and so we pass on into relations with the good perennials and shrubby things on which we can rely with a sense of contentment born of long experience.

Then, as a gentle spirit is ever going backward toward the Youth it remembers while the Youth it knows not draws near, our hearts go back to the lost dreams of our morning time and we come into fresh and closer companionship with the flowers of our dawn. The daffodil becomes a cup from which we drink—not to our friends behind, but to our friends before. Violets are violets no longer, but symbols of that which we can no more share with another than we can share aught else of the richest, sweetest happenings to our souls. Deep is calling unto deep, and once again, behold! all things are new.

As in the Shepherd's Calendar each month had its emblem, so has mine. January had the Christmas rose; February has a flower even fairer for her own. In the chill northern garden in which—in spite of the pencils and the foot-rule and the catalogues—I have gotten only so far as a wind-break, some box borders and a lattice, I must show you my snowdrops.

Their only rival is the border which grew in the garden at Nuneaton, where George Eliot played as a little sister. By the time she was old enough to drink in their beauty, the aged sods of snowdrops, a foot in width, bordered a path thirty feet long. I have dreamed about that border for years and years! Since there is no sensation more pure and innocent than the recognition of that first beating of the heart of the rising of the Spirit of all things visible—which is expressed in this flower. The tiny spark of vitality which warms the breast of the pines and the chick-a-dee is the only thing I know as full of the Life Everlasting as is the snowdrop. By her own courage she melts the snow above her, and pushes her green stalk through the round little well which she has thawed by the warm pulsing of her own high purpose, and aided by one, at least, of the

"ten thousand liveried angels"

which lackey the chaste soul. She hangs out her bells: green for summer coming; white for winter going. She has so many pretty names—Candlemas bells, Our Lady's bells, fair maids of February, Notre Dame Fevriere, the dainty lady with the honey-sweet breath!

After all, twenty-eight days are none too many for a moon which can bring us a snowdrop!

MARCH

On the western sky, in a yellow line
The wind of his might paints a warning sign.
The March clouds, torn like shipwrecked sails,
Drift at the will of the angry gales.
On crumbling log the moss grows green ;
The free'd brook laughs the rocks between ;
The melting snow, the sap's full tide,
The varnished buds that the young leaves hide ;
    These, and the flush on the Mayflower's cheek
    To dullest ear Spring's message speak.

SUNSET

MARCH

THE GREEN MOON

IF February be for plans, so is March. Already there is what countryfolk call "a feel of spring" in the air, and we are conscious of a distinct personality as he approaches —boisterous, uncertain, often unkind—always stimulating, and always sure to bring gifts which no one else can offer.

There are those who say "it is spring" when the last leaf is torn from the February calendar; there are those who are so precise as to leave the word unsaid until the sun has crossed the line, and they can take part in the ancient wrangle over the equinoctial storms. It is really spring when the first robin calls from the tree top, and the first bluebird warbles the delicate spirals of the plaintive melody of her "wandering voice." It is full spring for the heart when the solemn and mysterious calling of the wild geese cleaves the air with a sound that seems almost an echo from skies divided by their wedge-shaped flight. There is nothing that is quite of the same value as that high, lonely crying; and poor indeed is the garden above which it is not heard. I remember a warm, misty night when the birds, attracted by the lights of the city; bewildered by having lost their invisible clue; circled, crying, calling overhead for hours—a most mysterious night.

There are so many winds abroad in March, and so many cruel damps and chills, that I shall shut in my garden to-night by a high brick wall, and I shall content myself with smaller quarters than I found necessary when I needed wide spaces for my January evergreens, or when February called for long stretches for my box walks. I think I can get all I need within the compass of an acre, but I must insist upon the brick walls—red-brick, mellowed to dullness by time, and overgrown with the mosses that are so quick to respond to the warmth of the returning sun. I cannot but think that it was by observation of the quick colouring of these charming plants, and the way they have of turning the last frosts and the first rains to account by their swelling and expanding scales and fronds, that the Indians gave this month the name of "The Green Moon." Bradford Torrey happily says that "The North American Indians had a genius for names as the Greeks had for sculpture and for poetry." For thoughts reaching into the heart of things also, he might have added.

The mosses are the true aristocrats of that kingdom for which I devoutly wish we had a better name than vegetable. Theirs is the longest pedigree and the proudest consciousness of a great work done to make the world habitable. Forgotten in the great rush of modern life, they cling to the rocks and hide in the forests for the most part, but they love to haunt neglected walls and old roofs, giving the grace of their colour and texture to crumbling decay, and welcoming remembering winds and rains, quite careless of the poor creatures called men, who are but for a day.

The wall is to be broken here and there by shallow buttresses. Against these ivies cling, and the beautiful Japanese ampelopsis. There is an evergreen, climbing euonymus, which is excellent and hardy in such situations, and there must be roses everywhere. Even in March the strong canes and thorns of the roses are attractive, and although they have no leaves the tiny scarlet buds are bright with promise. Stiff junipers and standard box and fire-berries must group themselves along the wall irregularly, and there must be a thicket or two of Thunberg's barberry with coral tips along its quickset branches. This good little shrub bears the only berry which retains its colour all the winter. An upright evergreen euonymus is so great a favourite with me that I must have it standing sentinel wherever a sentinel is needed. In and around these bushes as much myrtle as chooses may grow unhindered, since nothing can be more cheerful than its shining leaves.

In the warmest angles of the wall I must have many plantings of the small-flowered yellow jessamine, which ought to be hardy everywhere, but which needs a bit of shelter as far north as Philadelphia. Its green canes are prettily angled and curve most gracefully, its pointed buds are so eager to turn themselves into golden stars that a bush is almost sure to bear a few of them after two or three days' sunshine in all but the bitterest weather. I do not know why this cheerful shrub, which is so peculiarly adapted to warm corners and sunny walls, is not more generally grown. It is so clean, so free from insect enemies, and so altogether desirable that I would that some Society for the Propagation of Good Cheer would send it forth broadcast over the land to preach its gospel of good will and hopefulness. Even in the coldest days a handful of its twigs brought into the house and placed in a glass of water will make haste to return thanks for the hospitality received, by opening its yellow blossoms, and all summer long its fountainlike growth makes it a thing of beauty.

Two or three scarlet maples must stand at the farther end of my garden, and close beside them, well away from drains and water-pipes, a willow or two, whose yellow stems will brighten as the days draw near in which they may toss out their catkins and push forth their leaves. The old English names of sallow and palm are forgotten here, the latter name being given by the sweet old fashion of using the green thing nearest at hand on Palm Sunday.

Not everyone knows that the odour of blossoming willows is one of the sweetest and most refreshing of odours. Willows are Nature's thermometers, which one soon learns to trust. Perhaps they will not open their buds just when we think they ought, but they know infallibly when winter is past and gone, and the time of singing birds appear; and it is a wise gardener who looks at his sallows, not at his almanac, or even at his last year's notebook.

In a proper March garden there is also a sassafras, a spice-bush, and a "pussy" willow: three true-hearted Americans, accustomed to our late springs, and careless of our inhospitable winds. There is small sense shown in sending all over the face of the earth for doubtfully adaptable shrubs when our own waste places give us such treasures as these and many another perfectly in harmony with our environment. More and more every year we are losing our idle desire for novelty and our slavish wish to imitate the gardens of other countries, and are coming to understand that our greatest opportunity for having successful plantings lies in our hearty acceptation of the aid of our closest neighbours. We are not of the tropics, so why waste time and money in efforts to give a tropical effect to our patently northern-temperate pleasure grounds? Thankfully, indeed, do we accept the treasures brought to us from foreign lands, and adapted to our needs by patient, generally unknown, growers, but it ought to be our pride to think first of those things which are a part of our goodly heritage as Americans. Good sense, as well as good patriotism and good taste, should lead us to make the most of the plants which have fitted themselves to our soil and our climate by uncounted ages of careful adjustment. Think of the trees which may be brought in from any bit of woodland and planted without the long exposure that must lie between a nursery and the planting site. Pines, oaks, elms, lindens, beeches, maples, sycamores, tulip-poplars, birches, hemlocks, larches, firs, spruces, wild cherries, catalpas, ash, mountain ash, sassafras! Look at the smaller trees and lesser shrubs, almost all of which grow within two hours' drive of our eastern or middle-western towns and villages, the judas tree, dogwoods, thorns, crab-apples, sumachs, wahoos, witch hazel, magnolia—for the south-east — fringe tree — south-east also — elders, white flowered and red berried. Then think of the rhododendrons, laurels, azaleas, barberries, blackberries, spice-bushes, wild roses and snowberries! Of hardy herbaceous plants and bulbs we have enough to keep the garden fair and sweet from early until late,—hepaticas, bloodroots, violets, thalactrums, trilliums, phloxes, lady's slippers, columbines, larkspurs, iris, lilies, lobelias, blue and red, monardas, liatris, ox-eyes, buttercups, ageratums, helianthus, rudbeckias, yarrows, goldenrods, all of the wonder-world of asters, the ferns, the grasses and the sedges! The list is endless, and the joy of giving a helping hand to these beautiful compatriots (some of whom are in danger of their lives from the ignorance and greed of men) is one that need not be withheld from anyone who has an ell of ground. If you like, you can buy all of these, and many another from some of the sensible and public-spirited growers, who devote themselves to the cultivation and dissemination of patriotism in this charming way. You will find, however, that your garden means something very much higher and broader and deeper if you can collect your treasures for yourself, and if, with every plant you gather into your fold, you garner also a memory of the time and place from whence it came; of the friend who dug it for you, sharing your joy in its discovery, and adding his good will to your happy tasks. A garden must send its roots down into the heart of all that goes to make your life if it is to avail in its highest purpose, and beneath the earth stirred by your spade and trowel there must be a subsoil rich with memories and sweet with love.

With hope also! March lies in the Region of Pure Hope, the one apostolic grace which comes by nature, and which outlasts our life. I like to think of it as having for its laureate the buoyant Stevenson, own brother to the robins and to the windy dawns and sunsets of the warring month, in his brave fight for better things. He must wear on his breast, as star of the order of high hearts, a knot of snowdrops, of which there would not be enough if half of the brown March fields were covered by their pearly blossoms. Even he did not say the right word concerning this flower, with the curved white sepals, the three of hearts painted in green upon their drooping corollas: the modest poise of their pretty heads; the faint sweet breath with which they call the half-awakened bees! To Wordsworth a snowdrop was "a part of the sermon on the Mount."

Even before the snowdrops come, the maples begun to think of spring, and their red leaf-scales and flower buds announce that the sap has already mounted to the farthermost tip of the branches, and sugar-making time is here. It marks the first stage of the farm-year in the woods, which are the best part of the farm-garden. The sweetest harvest of the temperate zone is that which drips from the wooden spills driven into the maple's bole, into the wooden trough below. Here is gardening indeed, and a welding of many industries into one. The troughs, to be proper sugar troughs, of the kind that belong to the old days before glucose and other abominations, are made by leisurely winter firesides, by members of those arts and crafts societies of the countryside whose work is always beautiful since it is always sincere and direct. The faint blue reek of the sugarmaker's fire, diffused through the still air, is reflected in the blue eyes which the first hepatica opens under its furry hood at the tree's foot, and which seems to be a part of the wild, uncloying sweetness drawn from the maple's very heart.

> "All the forest life is in it
> All the mystery and magic."

The name maple is almost the only Celtic plant-name left us—hawthorn and groundsel being its only rivals, and the sugar camp is the one link left our rather prosaic farmers, and their remotest nomadic ancestors. Sugar-making is not a labour: it is a rite.

When there are hepaticas in the wood-garden there are crocus in the home one. Their stout spears, covered by a tough, white, protective tissue, have been feeling their way since the snowdrops first hung out their welcome to the spring winds. Of these two, the gardener is exceedingly greedy, nor would he have too many if he walked through their native fields in Greece and the Levant. Men gather their golden hearts there, and make commerce of them, hiding their veniality by calling the product saffron. Of that colour were the robes of Aurora, and of Hymen, and of that

> "Lyric woman with the crocus vest
> Woven of sea wools."

sent to Cleon by Protus. Bacon would have crocus in the garden of his dreams, and spoke of them by the colours which they still wear for us—yellow, purple, white and *grey*. We have but to look at the shadows in a blue-and-white crocus to see that his use of the adjective is true, and that his eyes were more discriminating than ours would have been without them.

What a piece of work is that garden essay of his! After all the years, and even centuries, that have passed since it was written, it remains the crown and summit of all garden words. Where else are written down delights so ravishing as are condensed in those all too few pages in which he who had "taken all knowledge to be his province" tells of the pleasure gardens he would have if he could? Of all that he did or said or wrote nothing is so well known and well loved as his garden essay, which, like my own, lay in that part of Spain known as Heart's Delight. Wise and simple,

THE RIVER

rich and poor, how many generations of men have walked in thought over the thymy reaches of those sweet acres; have rested in those dusky boscages; have passed along the parti-coloured borders where

"One by one, the daughters of the year
Through that still garden passed,"

each with her coronal whose colours and odours no time can fade or change—a true paradise, that, in which world-weary hearts may ever walk by faith, and where joys pure and imperishable are hoarded up for the refreshment of the citizens of all time!

The little crocus hath made many friends, and loved ones and true.

"They were all said in Herrick's days,
Of flowers the fittest words of praise;
As worthy praise are you!
As brave you lift your chalice up,
With wine as rare you crown your cup,
O Crocus, brimmed with dew!

"And were old Robert here to paint
Your cheerful virtues, humble saint,
Pure, knowing naught of fear:
'Twould scarce be better worth your while
To light the March days with your smile,
Than 'tis for us, my dear;

"And in our northern land, as sweet
A welcome waits your punctual feet
As Charles's bard could bring.
Not lealer heart e'en he could bear,
Than ours that greet you, year by year,
O herald of the spring!

"For us the winter, too, was long
And hearts grew faint that had been strong
With waiting for your day!
But now, with happy bees that rest
For hours contented in your breast,
We sing our roundelay.

"Not richest gold of richest mine
Can 'gainst your yellow glories shine
And not grow dim and pale.
First largesse of the year, you are
In her bright dawn the fairest star
First, fairest, crocus, hail!"

Before the crocus are fairly aflame the black mould is pierced by the stout green shoots of the daffodil, an event to be marked in red letters in all the calendars of No-Man's-Land. The hour the pointed wedges cleave the earth is a sacred vigil, pointing onward to the holy day when the brave trumpets of this flower of flowers ushers in the spring. When one has once lost his heart to the daffodil, he has no recourse. All other blossoms seem tame and uninteresting beside it, and the rose herself but a common thing for a common eye.

Charles Lamb called Spenser "the poets' poet," and surely the daffodil is the poets' flower. From the oldest days it had its votaries among them, the singing syllables of its very name being brought from the asphodel which grows in many a goddess-haunted meadow, and which was, men think, this very flower. We know it to have been called asphodel of old French and English bards, and how dearly they have loved it we may know if we care to read. Chaucer cared for the flowers, Spenser saw them blooming in fairyland, and Shakespeare made himself their poet laureate for ever when he spoke of the

> "Daffodils
> That come before the swallow dares, and takes
> The winds of March with beauty."

Milton wove them into that strange garland which only a town-bred fancy could have fashioned.

> "To deck the laureate hearse where Lycid lies."

Herrick followed with delicate, pensive verses, so true, so dear, that he who has read them a hundred times has only begun to discern their beauty. Keats and Shelley loved them, and oh! how they danced before Wordsworth's adoring eyes!

To Swinburne they showed one of their many sides before he wrote of one of them—

> "Erect, a fighting flower,
> It breasts the breeziest hour
> That ever blew;
> . . . . .
> For all the storm wind saith still,
> Stout stands the daffodil."

In a most appreciative study of the flower the Rev. Hugh Macmillan wrote: "There is no flower so vigorous and so full of life. It has the strength and simplicity of a Doric column. We have in this flower of March, the beautiful combination of winter and summer; of the raincloud and the sunbeam; of the warmth of the sun in its bloom, and the coolness and freshness of the floods in its leaves: the whole plant being thus an expressive symbol of the true elements that help to make up its lovely life."

We could follow it through the pages of Tennyson, of the Rossettis, of de Vere, of Jean Ingelow, of Mrs Ewing, of Austin Dobson, and of many and many a writer whose pages have been lightened by the charming gaiety of its virginal innocence. Among all the books that be there is one lacking, and that is one in which all that has been said and painted and sung of this flower may be gathered into a volume for its lovers. I wonder if there would be room in it for such lines as these—

The March winds blow, now high, now low,
The changeful shadows come and go,
The old Earth stirs in her sleep and wakes,
On greening fields her glad smile breaks.

And into the ear of the waking year
Faint, fairy music is ringing clear:
Blown from the golden trumpets fair
The daffodils lift high in air.

Alert, arrayed for dress parade,
Comes marching now the bright brigade
Triumphant, proud, not one to spare
However many may be there.

Of the tint of skies where daylight dies;
Of the faint, sweet scent of Paradise;
Cool, up-springing 'mid pale-green leaves,
What is this spell that the March air weaves?

Over the wold, whence frost and cold
Have gone from the damp, life-giving mould.
Can you not hear when winds are still,
The gay fanfare of the daffodil?

"Sorrow is past," peals the jocund blast,
"Joy with the morning is come at last:
Stout we have kept our hearts till now,
Though night was long in the dark below.

"But for a day our brave array
Then, like a shadow, we pass away,
Other springs will have other flowers,
Only this little day is ours:

"Whither we go we do not know:
We are content that it should be so:
Life no briefer than Love may be,
And Love is as long as Eternity:

"Safe in the Hand that our beauty planned,
Ours but to follow—not to command.
Gladly we follow where He wills,
The Lord of the Host of the daffodils."

There is no better plant than this for the wide and poetic use which people call naturalising, and there is no better mission for any plant than to be sent forth to do its work and live its life in its own way. A hillside sloping sunwards with a partial shading of a few trees, with a little stream at its foot, or a level pond for mirror, is made more than beautiful if shot over with these golden flowers. A stretch of orchard grass, left to itself until June hay is ready for the mower, is the best possible home for the daffodil. I have seen them by the hundred about the ruins of forgotten homesteads, where, as in Dr Holmes' pathetic verse, only the cellar and the well are left to speak of the place whence life and thought are gone away. They are at their best, also, in a "careless orchard garden" and lose much if planted in rows and circles after the manner of the Philistines. Since there are so many varieties and sub-varieties of the lovely narcissi they may be with us for over a month—perhaps for two months, beginning always with that clear trumpet of pale yellow in which there are green shadows and frosty high lights. The scent is like the scent of no other flower, and looking into its heart one sees, perhaps, as far into infinity as it is given to man to look.

Wherever the Garden of Heart's Desire may lie, when March winds are blowing it must be rich with those faint stirrings of the under-heart which show that the year has turned indeed. There are purplish shoots which tell where the phlox will start its upward way; there are pink cones which show where the peony roots are bedded. Before we have had time to look for them, the columbines have unfurled two or three metallic root leaves and some of the hardiest pinks are brightening up their long silvery spears. There is a pansy already in the warmest corner. The chickweed, hardiest of all our native plants, rarely lets a fortnight pass without looking out to see if the world is still faring on in the old way, and the paths are fringed over with the fairy laces of the whitlow grass.

Crocus, as many as may be, daffodils, more and more and yet more. This is my idea of a Green Moon garden.

APRIL

The swallows circle, the robins call,
The lark's song rises, faints and falls;
The peach boughs blush with rosiest bloom
Like ghosts, in the twilight, pear-trees loom:
The maples glow, and the daffodils
Wear the same hue that the west sky fills:
The moon's young crescent, thin and bright,
Shines in the blue of the early night:
    And over all, through all, April bears
    A hope that laughs at Winter's fears;

THE MEADOW

APRIL

THE MOON OF PLANTS

WERE ever five letters compact into another word as sweet as April? The very syllables seem to drip with freshening showers; to glisten with sudden, relenting shafts of sunlight, and to glow and pale with the rainbows which span the drifting, purple clouds. The songs of mating birds are in them; the scents of the quickening earth; the taste of spiced buds; the touch of light breezes; the sights of the infinite awakenings and unfoldings of the world about us. For every sense its own delights; for every letter a thousand new sensations; for every day a new heaven and a new earth.

When April goes through the fields which are hastily donning festal garments in his honour, he pipes on a magic flute which neither young nor old, merry nor sad, grave nor gay can withstand. Feet that have plodded along aweary are eager now to follow and to find. After him, over the vernal meadows, and through the thickening woods, troop the goodly fellowship of the poets who have been his joyous slaves, and one with the perennial freshness of the songs of his birds are the haunting words into which they have tried to put his charm. That they could not do so was no fault of theirs. The glory and the beauty of April are for the spirit and cannot be made flesh.

All of the virtues praised by the Apostles may be found in an April garden, but it is chiefly as a Land of Promise that it looks to us, as the first days come and go. Daffodils are abloom by the hundred, and in many varying shades of sun-colour. There is more sentiment connected with the old-fashioned yellow one, but there are so many lovely narcissi, that the day of this charming flower may be greatly prolonged by planting in many sorts together. I, myself, in happier days, had a bed of them which bloomed for six weeks, and even that time might have been prolonged if I had had some of the bulbs of a dear old double white variety that used to grow in old gardens here and there. It cannot be forced, so the florists do not care for it, and it will not be coaxed or bribed into yielding any considerable number of flower stalks, but it has a richness of texture, and a subtlety of odour which makes its scantily borne blossoms a distinct feature even when the garden is bright with tulips, and the earlier iris. I am taking leave to class all of these delightful flowers—daffodils, jonquils, narcissi—under one head; which saves trouble; takes them away from the unsympathetic rulings of scientific nomenclature; and puts them where they (of all flowers) belong: in the dear company of the best-beloved, who look up and smile an answer no matter by what name they are called.

Snowdrops have begun to drowse a little, but the crocus are in their glory. If you care for a new colour sensation blend into a heavy planting of dark purple crocus as many blue scillas as you can get. When they open their hearts to the sunbeams you will see with your inner vision the light falling through old minster windows, and you will hear, with that subtle inner hearing which goes with a sense of fair colours, a deep-toned organ playing, and the chanting of many voices in a glad *Te Deum.* You will remember it as I remember an April symphony which I saw long ago, and far away, and for an hour only. A long oval bed was bordered by that hardy, white-wooled cineraria whose leaves start forth as soon as the snows are gone. Inside this border a second border, evidently the growth of many years, since it was so very dense, bore hundreds of clusters of yellow primroses—*schlusselblumen,* St Peter's keys—and then a central space filled with brown wallflowers, which were orange in some lights, and black in some shadows, and velvet everywhere. Beyond this stretched the April-grey valley, and the blue mountains which lost themselves in the ineffable beauty of an April sky.

I have said April-grey since I dared not use the word green to describe that faint, undefined change which comes over the world which has just left March behind it. There are yellows in this grey, and there are blues, so there must be greens also; but so faint are they, so ethereal, that they seem to be but that alluring mist which hides the future, or that gracious haze which blots out the past. If the outlook be wide enough, there must be in it semitones of brown, swelling beechen buds, and russets, and pinks, and bronzes, and even crimsons and lilacs of other expanding scales; but in spite of these I think I am right in the use of the adjective which is so charming at the dawn of a summer day, and so dead and cold when a November night shuts down upon us.

The grass too has a greyish tone unlike the dull ochre of its March gown, since its springing green is feathered here and there with the first silvery panicles of its quiet blossoming. What an endless variety there is to the grass! Compared with its soft blending of many tints and textures how crude are the best greens of man's compounding! The blessed grass! Mother of all grains, nourisher of all life! How fit it is that of whatsoever we tire, we never tire of it, since that which was the softest playground for our infant feet becomes the sweetest, tenderest covering for our last long sleep! Patient, humble, working always for others, there is no lesson we may not learn from its "clear courage."

I should like to have a grass garden. Think of the possibilities of a stretch of ground given over to it, and to whatever else the wind cared to add to it by way of seedlings. The gentle little silvery grass just spoken of should be there; the aristocratic blue grass—the tall, soldierly timothy, with its purple-fringed banners; the redtop in which one sees a forecast of oak-woods in autumn; the foxtails; the quaking grasses, and many another whose names I do not know, but of whose beauties I am sure. To be perfect, this garden would slope downward to a marshy hollow, where wild rice and many sedges would grow, and should rise to a hill-crest down which winds should race over billowing, golden wheat, or grey-green oats. Maize would be planted in a field so close at hand that all the summer would be filled with the music of its leaves, whisper, whisper, whispering; and somewhere about should be a patch of broom corn and of sorghum to show how regal are the growths of these largest grasses of the temperate zone. Of grasses alone a most lovely garden could be made, but among them what a succession of other things would give themselves permission to grow! Dandelions would be almost the first comers, unbuttoning their flat rosettes of dented leaves from the sod, and throwing out a few coins of that larger minting which is the true largesse of May. Clovers would follow, daisies would follow. Buttercups would be there, bindweeds, milkweeds, speedwell, catchfly, yarrow, with mullein, mints, each so generously given, each stealing after his forerunner so silently and so surely that we have hardly time to say "The clover is here," before the clover has gone, and we are crying "It is yarrow-day!"

With April in the air, comes a passionate desire to be in the open, and to one who is village-bred it is to village garden plots that he would return. There, he knows, the dark soil is already turned up toward the sun by that first spading which, like the sowing of seeds, and the gathering in of harvests, has the symbolism of the most elemental acts. In the village streets householders are keeping a holiday by burning the waste and wreckage of last year. It is almost a religious rite, the making of these vernal fires. There is a special colour and odour given off from them, and the man with his rake, or the woman with her basket just emptied on the smoking, smouldering pile, are priest and priestess, all unknowing. Blue-birds are singing their pretty, plaintive notes as the blue reek curls upward, and robins are busy in the freshly upturned soil from which the rubbish has been taken. There are a few clouds over the sun, but there is no wind, and the air is warm. The day for the spring bonfire is always carefully chosen lest the flames spread. Everything is still and sweet, with the wandering voices of the blue-birds to listen to, and a handful of ladies' delights to look at. It is only in old village gardens that these brave and cheerful little pansykins grow, but there they are always abroad to overlook the April bonfire. Modern plantings know them not, and modern seedsmen have never heard of them. They are called *viola tricolour* in the botanies, and *adv. frm. Eu.* is placed after so meagre a description of them that no one could guess them to be the dear, familiar friend to whom our honest forefathers gave so many names. Garden gate, birds' eye, three-faces-under-a-hood, Kit-runabout, come-and-cuddle-me, come-and-kiss-me, kiss-me-ere-I-rise, pink of my Joan, Johnny-jump-up, and that astonishing combination of words "Meet-her-in-the-entry, kiss-her-in-the-buttery," which Mrs Earle assures us is a name only to be excelled in singularity by the folk-name of a stonecrop, which Miss Jeykll reports "Welcome home, husband, be you ever so drunk." I would like to think that no one but Patient Griselda ever grew stonecrops!

That the seedsmen do not list this dear old friend is no matter: it is even better so, since a flower so intensely human ought not to be sold, any more than love should be sold. It should pass from hand to hand between people to whom it is dear. Once received, it knows its own, and will camp down with the utmost composure, and with all the good will in the world in precisely that corner in which it is most needed, and once there will offer their bright little posies almost every day in the year. In 1587 Gerarde wrote of them:

"The floure is in form and figure like the Violet, and for the most part of the same Bigness, of three sundry colours purple, yellow, white or blew, by reason of the beauty and braverie of which colours they are very pleasing to the eye, for smel they have little or none." With this statement I beg to differ with the worthy herbalist, since there are but few odours that are as absolutely fresh and pure as that of this little flower; the violet and primrose only having allied qualities. Tiny enchanted princesses, the children of my day called them, and fancied out all sorts of adventures for them in the quiet old gardens, where they sun themselves as they did in Anne Hathaway's, where young Will Shakespeare must have loved them. I like to believe that she carried some of the little friends with her, when the family moved to the grand New Place, and so tried, as women will, to keep old memories sweet. And I am almost sure that the ladies' delights were the pansies

"freaked with jet"

which Milton knew.

In a village garden of the old days, crocus were planted in stiff little bunches close to the southern walls of the houses, where the eaves sheltered them, in a way, and the radiated warmth of the foundation bricks urged them into the earliest possible blooming. It is a much better fashion than the modern one of scattering them about the lawn. Lawns have their own work to do, even on the smallest grounds, and should rightly be a smooth stretch of even, well-clipped sward of blended grasses and white clover. Even the presence of the tiny Veronica,

> "The little speedwell's darling blue,"

or pink-tipped English daisies, escaped from the border, and lapsed back into single blessedness, is not to be tolerated; while only less pernicious than plantain is the intrusive little ground ivy, or Jill-over-the-ground, which is in itself an exceedingly pretty plant, with clean round leaves and very attractive little blossoms. If custom bars out these gay little vagrants, why should it insist on the tiresome and costly planting of crocus bulbs, which, so used, can never have the advantage of the close massing in which they show at their best, and where they can mature their leaves and store up food against the winter in a way impossible on the lawn? Nature abhors a spotty effect. If she uses but one or two specimens of a flower in her landscape making, she so blends it with its surroundings as to double its value, and she never dissociates it from the background best suited to it.

I am very fond of the long, narrow beds which are always connected with the village garden ways. Proper beds are two, or at most three feet wide, and as long as possible, with strips of grassy sod as wide or wider between. There is no way in which the amateur gardener can so easily plant, and dig, and weed, and fertilise, and cover his pets as in these beds which can be reached into, or leaned over so comfortably. In the days of front yards, which are gone where so many dear and beautiful things are gone, it was thus that the walk that led from the front door to the front gate was adorned. In them grew the choicest bushes and plants possessed by the ladies, to whom chiefly the flowers belonged, and who thus offered to their guests the most charming and delicate welcomes and farewells. Larger shrubs, and hardier, coarser flowers grew along the fences dividing the yard from its fellows on either hand, and one has only to be old enough to be able to remember the days when the individual was not yet merged into the mass, and it was still possible to express oneself, and not be, of necessity, a copy of one's neighbour to remember those border fences!

And now that by chance I have found myself in an old front yard, I shall stay there a bit, and shall make what plea I may for a return to the sweet old ideals which make them possible. They belonged to the days when children arose from their seats when their elders entered the room, and when even big girls would have blushed with shame at the idea of going about the streets ungloved and unbonneted. They were a part of the time when reverence for sacred things; when belief in reserve and courtesy; in leisure and thoughtfulness; in hospitality and unselfishness, were a part of the common heritage: and who shall say that these high things were not, in a way, dependent upon the fences, and upon the gates which shut out the world from the demesne which belonged to the family? To step into a man's private grounds without the preliminary formality of opening his gate—with a clicking latch certainly, and with a rusty hinge perhaps—is it not as offensive to the highest breeding as it would be to call him by his Christian name?

The old front yards, then, were always sheltered behind fences, and along these was planted a fringing of large growing shrubs, lilacs oftenest, whose bronze-green first leaves give forth a scent as memorable as any the plumy blossoms ever boasted; syringas, as they were called—Philadelphus, as they are listed; Japan quince, flowery almond, strawberry bushes, spireas, snowberries,—such things as these. They did not form a proper hedge, since after one had passed one's first years it was easy to peep between them, or above them into the yard beyond, but they served the same purpose that a veil of lace does to a lady's face: they softened the features and gave a hint of reserve that was most attractive. The choicest shrubs stood on either side of the gate, and that barrier once passed the visitor was in the full enjoyment of whatever the season had to offer; since the path to the front door was bordered by the long beds which have served as a text for this digression. A list of the flowers seen in an afternoon spent in paying visits in the old days would have held the name of almost everything which could endure the cold winters and withstand the late springs and the hot summers of the village in which I chiefly knew them, yet no two borders would be alike, and the tastes and opportunities of the owners of the beds were revealed in the most fascinating way. The experience of a very few years taught the children just where to go to see the flowers which they loved, and in their eyes the village ladies were important in degrees that varied with their success in raising this flower or that. Their charms and virtues were catalogued in the minds of the small critics in proportion to the generosity with which they shared their gardens with their little neighbours. I think that my own mental collection of old ladies—a collection of immeasurable value to me—began with opposing types of front yard gardeners, and I am not sure that I have ever added to it the portrait of anyone who had no taste in gardening.

Looking backward the ideal garden seems to me to have been in a front yard!

It belonged, as so many did, to a woman who had never had a child, and who had sought and found, in the flowers of God's giving, the comfort other women find in their children. I do not know where she came from, nor who were her kindred. Where rests the little handful of dust which was once her tiny, alert body I know, but even that everyone else seems to have forgotten, since beside the handful of pansies I take there, once in a while, no one ever seems to give a flower to her who gave so many to others. I do not know what was in her house, for I never entered it, and I have no idea what became of her during the long white days that closed down soon after the last tiny pink and yellow chrysanthemums had faded under her windows. When she went to the Methodist meeting-house she wore a black silk gown, with a handsome lace shawl draped carefully over her shoulders, and she carried a fringed parasol in her lace-gloved hands. Always, I think, since I do not recollect her in any other robes of state, so she must have belonged to summer; and other of my old ladies I can recall as having furs and velvet pelisses, and plumes in their bonnets. My only communications with her were the fervent thanks with which I received the bounty her good hands held out in answer to the appeal of my eyes as I hung on the pickets of her fence, and watched her moving about among her flowers. When I have gardened, my hands have been sights to behold, my hair tosses in the wind, and my face flushes sadly. When she held her trowel in her half-gloved hands, no stain of the earth ever touched her little, white fingers, and the pretty crispings of her hair were never in the least dishevelled. Perhaps her exquisite personal orderliness was the reason why things grew for her better than they grew for anyone else, and why spring seems to have stayed for ever near her! Japan quinces seem always to have flamed against her fences, and kerrias, in her borders, perpetually tossed the golden balls of their pretty pawnshop where bees bartered song for honey. Below them clusters of yellow English primroses alternated with plots of the very whitest, doublest, double white daisies ever seen. Between these and the rows of tall, late tulips were mats of pansies of every shade that pansies ever were anywhere — thousands of pansies, like and yet unlike the gay little ladies' delights I have been praising. Did I say I loved those better than these? That was an hour ago, and an hour is long for April constancy, and here are the pansies eager to claim an allegiance no one can deny. One of the other old ladies, who had a long-ago front yard, and had also the sweet and gentle fancies which must needs come to all who share in the innocent joys of a garden, said of her pansies :

"I love the little things best of all. They look up into the face of their Heavenly Father as if they hadn't a thing to be ashamed of."

An appreciation that seems to me to reveal the secret which has made men call them heart's-ease. In the coldest Januarys the blossoms look out from under their purple hoods, and when the latest November storm has turned the bravest chrysanthemum into a bit of brown wreckage, they are still here to bid us be of good courage. Full of mischief they seem to be at times, but full, sometimes, of a divine directness of glance which makes plain what was meant by a poor outcast of the slums to whom a knot of white pansies was once given. She looked at them, and with a burst of tears she answered them :

"I'll try!" she said. "Indeed I'll try!"

Proper borders are to be planted as it were antiphonally. If a group of Madonna lilies stands at the end of the right-hand border, another group must stand at the left. There must be two clumps of bluebells, not one, and two flat cushions of the grey-green leaves, and fringed white or rosy moss-pinks. Strong little bushes of Hermosa roses must be balanced by more Hermosas, and if one is forced to begin with only two blades of the small blue iris, which is like a baby's eyes for blueness, one must be planted in each border, with a view to the future. The iris are not called iris in a proper border, but flags, and great sheaves of them in royal blues and glacial whites must grow along the fences beside the peonies, the tall Greek valerian, the lemon lilies and the columbines.

A front yard is no place for trees. Trees grow outside, in the strip of clean grass between the walk and the roadway, where their shadows cannot harm the flowers. It is always permitted, however, that a few old apple and pear trees stand about, for the very obvious reason that they are bouquets themselves, the hugest and sweetest imaginable, and that under them the violets love to grow, and violets are as much a part of April as the sunshine or the rain. When one begins to speak of violets one loses all self-control and becomes frankly sentimental, and ready to swear with Mahomet that they are "only comparable with the religion of Islam." Of them more than of any flower it may be said that "they admonish and stir up a man to that which is comelie and honest, for their beauty, varietie of colours and exquisite form do bring to a liberal and gentlemanlie mind the remembrance of honestie, comeliness and all kinds of virtue." Such is what the old herbalist Gerarde calls "the gallant grace of violets," that its colour gives name to one of the bands of the rainbow.

> "Those seven listed colours whence the Sun
> Maketh his bow, and Cynthia her zone."

The rainbow itself would be unimaginable but for the thrill of that last, loveliest, fleeting bar—given the last place, as in a triumphant pageant the crowning glory is left for the vanishing moment. In almost all languages its name is but a variant of one singing word.

One with youth and beauty, one with new sweet love, and older sweeter constancy, it is the rival of the rose, winning by one subtle test. The blossoms that are folded away where no eye but your own can see them—what are they? Roses? You know that they are violets, and that, however brown and dead they might seem to others, to you they will always be fresh and fair. These are the flowers we love to think of as lying on the breast of Mary the Mother, and how many a beloved face has been shut away from the sight of all living with less anguish because it was pillowed on these faithful hearts.

Borders of them grew in the yards I speak of—mats of them, carpets of them, and never one too many. Little fragrant white ones, for April only, and purple ones that rarely fail to have a blossom or two on hand except in the hot midsummer days when they are busy with small, fertile blooms, which no one knows about but the bees, and with packing their seeds into little purses which shut and open with a spring. A royal flower, the violet, in many ways besides its colour!

Beside these and the roses, which came later, and which sat apart in a corner by themselves, the old front yards were rich in tulips, which were planted in double rows against bunches of white columbines. People either love tulips passionately or they do not care for them at all. They are not flowers to be half-hearted about, any more than they are flowers to plant by the dozen. Dozens of hyacinths, if you like their heavy odour and their stiff, haughty stems, but hundreds of tulips, red

> "Like a thin clear bubble of blood,"

pink, white, yellow, orange, brown, with such tones and semitones of colour that, borrowing the words from music, one can almost hear their loud triumphant pæan of victory over Winter.

There was always room near the tulips for plenty of little dull-pink polyanthus, with their cheerful April faces, and there was always a corner for the wild flowers brought home from woodland rambles—hepaticas, bloodroots, dicantras, trilliums, windflowers, sweet williams, larkspurs, with perhaps some cypredediums, the "moccasin flower" of the early Protestants, the "lady slipper" of the Catholic pioneer. It is a great pleasure to see so many of our native plants now figuring in the catalogues, although but a short experience will teach the average grower that very many of the shy, wild things will not accommodate themselves to new conditions. The appalling waste of our forests caused by the greed of lumbermen; the devastation worked by fire or by the needs of settlers; the cutting off of water supplies; the draining of marshes; the reclamation of sandy wastes, and, alas! the cruel thoughtlessness of flower hunters—all these are hurrying on the day when Americans will be forced to look in the glossaries made by the editors of their time, of the poets of ours, to find out what was meant by Indian pipes, or Quaker ladies, or Mayflowers.

Mayflowers! Of no garden but that of Nature's most thought-filled planting, half hidden by last year's fallen leaves, neighboured by pipsissiwa, by crimson-berried wintergreen, or partridge-berry, by curling wreaths and plumes of ground pine, it is the flower that made the exile of our forefathers bearable; the truest of all Americans, the freest, shyest thing that grows. In the flush of its rosy cheek, in the absolutely individual sweetness of its fleeting breath lie all the Aprils that have been or that yet may be.

MAY

Over the pebbles the brown brooks flow,
Singing their cool songs, sweet and low :
From white-boled beech, and elm top tall
On lilied shallows deep shades fall:
In swaying cradles white eggs rest
Safe and warm 'neath the brooding breast:
Sweetbriar lifts her winsome face,
The brambles weave their lines of grace,
    All joys are here, each dear delight,
    And April's faith in May is sight.

THE ROSE GARDEN

MAY

THE MOON OF FLOWERS

IF the five letters that spell out the delights of April are enchanted, what of the three that guard the secrets and publish the joys of the time when "the year has piloted us once more into the flowery harbour of May"?

There is now no longer any need to wonder if that be a rising mist which veils the maples,

> "Blown silver by the winds,"

for the flowering of the trees themselves stand confessed, and before this certainty has been fairly grasped, the rose-pink vapour which has trembled over the oaks has been condensed into the velvet foliage which tells the farmer that corn planting time has come. A solemn holyday if men would but look at it rightly, when the

> "Son of six thousand golden sires"

is dropped trustfully into the dark bosom of the great Mother, who takes us all—seed and man—with equal care and carelessness, into her keeping.

In Maytime the best gardens are not gardens, but are orchards, and orchards to be the best orchards are apple orchards. Orange and lemon groves are very beautiful, but they are too newly come among us and are too local to touch the common heart. One must have a certain peculiar training to care for rows of peach-trees, and it would, I think, be impossible to enter into very intimate relations with them in spite of the exceeding loveliness of their short flowering time. Cherries and pears and plums are charming in their virginal purity, but it is to old apple-trees that thought flies with unerring instinct and directness when one thinks of an orchard.

I thank the tiny brain-cells in which the greater part of my earthly possessions are kept, that they hold so close and so fast so many orchard pictures that it does not much matter where Time and Chance lead my body, since I can go back when I will to the old familiar places and see—— This is what I see.

A place without limit, because the eyes

which look at it had as yet no sense of proportion; and yet it was but a little orchard, after all, hedged in between a bit of sloping meadow and an ancient wood. The meadow was an ocean, if it chanced to be sown with oats, rippled into waves by wandering breezes. It was the field of the Cloth of Gold when wheat was ripening there. Armies encamped on it what time hay was drying in tiny cocks, and it was a village of Indian tepees when corn was gathered into pointed stooks. And so, too, the wood was not simply a little wood. It was the Schwartz-wald; it was the forest of Arden; it was the home of Robin Hood and his merry men, the lair of fearsome giants and trolls, and winged dragons. It was the jungle in which wild beasts and painted savages skulked; it was the haunt of elves and fairies. Enchanted castles were hidden in its depths; robber caves were shadowed by its great trees; and beautiful princesses and knights, without fear and without reproach, wandered through its leafy glades by moonlight.

And the garden through which a pathway led to the pear-trees growing at the orchard's foot! More eyes than mine can see it, when I say of it that it was

GRANDMOTHER'S GARDEN

"In grandmother's garden! The very words
Bring back the carols of long-dead birds:
Bring back the croonings of countless bees;
Bring back the odour-ladened breeze
That swept through the white-domed orchard trees,
And the purple plumes that the lilacs bore,
And the sweet May-roses beside the door.
The world is old, and over it still
The world-winds wander and range at will,
But they cannot blow, so far—so free
As to find that garden again for me!

"In grandmother's garden the hollyhocks
Row upon row lifted wreathed stalks
With bloom of purple, of pearly white,
Of close-frilled yellow, of crimson bright.
In ruffled robes of satin dight
With pointed mantles of powdered greens
What gay court ladies, what royal queens,
—With each a daisy for diadem!—
What pomps and pageants we made of them
In the sweet, lost garden we used to know
In sweet, lost years—so long ago!

"In grandmother's garden the roses red
Grew in a long, straight garden bed,
By yellow roses with small close leaves;
And yuccas,—we called them Adams-and-Eves!—
Threaded with fringes of fairy weaves;
By marigolds in velvet browns,
And heart's-ease in their splendid gowns;

Primrose, waiting the twilight hours.
Touch-me-nots, and gilliflowers.
Was it October or June, or May
Grandmother's garden was always gay.

"In grandmother's garden the iris blue
Unfurled his banner, his snood leaves drew
And marshalled the slim, red tulips, tall,
The peony's bursting crimson ball,
The almond wands and the moss-pinks small,
Buttercups spendthrift of their gold,
Columbines misers of sweets untold,
Gay Sweet Williams, and four-o'-clocks,
Prodigal sheaves of the cool white phlox;
The lovely army has long marched past
For grandmother's garden could not last.

'Grandmother's garden! ah, who knows
In what far, heavenly land it grows!
Watched, perhaps, by her loving eyes;
Kept for us as a glad surprise
When we shall reach her in Paradise!
Not one missing, one tiniest leaf,
One breath of fragrance—one bird-song brief
Nor—ah, God grant it!—one that played—
Lad true-hearted or bright-eyed maid—
In the shade the lilacs used to throw
In grandmother's garden—long ago!"

And then the apple-trees! There was much grass in the place, and where the still acres dipped toward the wood many violets were blue in April, and early in May turned down the borders of their caps to make ready for the long nap which should last until another April came dancing over the fields. The young browns and greens of the forest trees stand out in glad contrast to the bloom by which the peach boughs call the bees in a thousand tones of the colour—which is not blue, nor crimson, nor pink, nor lilac—but peach blow! There are cherries and pears beyond the garden gate, but of the apples there were aisles and tents, all heavy with blossoms and murmurous with bees. Could the body, uplifted, sanctified, ask for a lordlier pleasure house than this? Oh, to be this night in that true Paradise, that old orchard, where the apple-trees are blooming—and where it is always May!—Oh, to see once more, and to hear once more, and to touch once more that which comes back, with the single bough of young bloom which is all the May bloom that is mine!

> "Soft on thy lips I lay this tender kiss
> My cheek I press against thy breast of snow
> Who bringst me back the wonder and the bliss
> I knew in an old orchard, long ago!"

There can be no task of importance great enough to be rightly bartered for one of the

BLOSSOM

hours of the apple-blooming days, no duty that might not better be left undone that this little hour may be garnered and treasured up to a life beyond life by the refreshed and restored soul. Under the trees are the green pastures of recreation; beside them flow the still waters of purification. Theirs are the embroidered veils of the temple wherein countless urns of incense are swinging. Only good thoughts can dwell in an orchard, and only with a pure heart and clean hands might man venture into its sacred precincts.

There are birds in the orchard. In every tree they have found a home, coming back, year after year, to the pleasant haunts of their ancestors, saying to their nestlings, no doubt: "From time out of mind this orchard has belonged to our family, and this apple-tree has been our habitation from all generations. It is a great thing to be a bird of assured position, and to have a landed estate." They are not unmindful of the laws of reciprocity, and for their shelter pay such a toll of song that from grey dawn until grey dusk the air is thrilling with music. Richard Jeffries has boasted that every loaf of English bread had been sung over by an English lark, and we may say that every apple eaten by the Christmas fire was cradled and ripened to melodies composed by the Lord and Giver of Life Himself, and was performed by an orchestra of His own choosing.

So many birds! So many nests! In that rough mud-and-stick nursery on the apple bough a robin sits on five turquoise-coloured eggs, and on that careless layer of twigs a dove broods over two white treasures. An oriole has swung a horse-hair hammock high in the pear-tree, and in the hole in its trunk a blue-bird has hidden the pale, fitful opal-blue eggs which shall be song and colour and movement before long. An old cap, left hanging on a limb, by a careless boy, is home to the wren for whose ecstasy the days are not long enough. Cat-birds and thrushes fancy the hedges belong to them, and make very personal remarks about the sparrows who, nothing daunted, perch on the tip of the quickset boughs and sing such a song as brings to mind the loving exclamation of Izaak Walton: "Lord, what music hast thou provided for thy Saints in heaven when thou affordest bad men such music on earth!" If there were not so many dear birds in the lovely May world, surely the sparrows would be dearest of all!

And yet, in the thickets, in the grasses, in the tall trees, how many shy feathered things find refuge. In the fields the quails are whistling, and in the pine-trees the grackles are cawing. The barns and sheds belong to the phœbes and to the swallows. The swallows are gay freebooters, busy with their own concerns from morning until night; but the little phœbes sit about quite idly, complaining with their pretty little sorrowful voices that seem to have nothing in common with the riotous mirth of their neighbours, whose epithalamiums are filling the world with joy. Ah, there were birds in plenty in the orchard that I loved, and it was because the little brothers of the air knew that its master loved them, that all gentle minnesingers rested safely when he was near. What if their presence meant a scanty crop of cherries, or the loss of the juiciest pears? A single sparrow singing in the hedge at dawn was worth all the cherries that ever grew, and all the pears that ever ripened were but a poor exchange for the evening hymns of the thrushes, hidden deep in the wood. Because of this fostering care the May festivals there were the finest in all the countryside. Oh, dear Master of the Orchard! now that your many, many Mays have been given back to you, who have gone on with the gentle story of your life of love, and patience, and all sweet brotherliness, and pure delight in all the works of the Good Being for token; now that all your part in

> "The summer glory of the hills
> Is that your grave is green,"

the little friends are true to you, and your high requiem is still chanted from your trees!

A May garden must be hedged in by lilacs, that we may drink deep of the joy of the season which Dick Steele gives us leave to call the youtherie of the year, and for which Horace Walpole revived the charming folk-name lilactive. There are many things of which we can never have enough, and one of them is the lilac. Lilag, the Persians call it, and it is Oriental to the last tip of the tossing plumes of purple and white, and blue, and rose-colour, all blended in that lovely colour for which we have no name but the name of the flower itself. To read "The Arabian Nights" properly one must read the stories where riot these blossoms, which carry in their scent all that they have to tell; and where, lifting half-conscious eyes from the page, one can see the butterflies hovering over the blossoms as they hover nowhere else, palpitating, wavering, poising drifting!

It is singular that this flower, steeped in Eastern sensuousness, should have been the chosen one of the Pilgrim women of Puritan days, but it is so. Whatever else they were forced to leave behind or to forego, they had always lilacs springing up about the doors of the habitations in the wilderness to which they brought their longing thoughts of the homes they would see no more. Generation after generation, the lilacs have followed the family fortunes, lilacs, and sweetbriar roses outlining the very name of the dwellers in the deserted houses beside which they stand on faithful guard, until at last there is nothing left to tell of the gentle souls who cared for the flowers, but their yearly appeal for sympathy.

Next after the lilac and the sweetbriar, in the homespun garden, must be the almond. "Flowery almond" the country folks call it, in fine recognition of its lavish bloom, "the Awakener" being its name in the Palestine of its nativity. Since I may have all the almonds I care for in this White-paper Garden, I will have them by the score. They, too, belong by right to the meek-eyed Puritan women. Wherever they went, together with the lilac and the sweetbriar rose, they carried the Madonna lily and the almond. I wonder to what subliminal consciousness they appealed, since, surely, it was to something quite outside of their narrow, colourless lives! I wonder what?

The charm of the almond is unspeakable. Nothing loses more by being cut and carried indoors. Yet the impulse to do so is all but compelling. Nothing gains less by careful culture. The almond is sufficient to itself, and its long wands, beset with little pink roses, are as lovely and as luxuriant by the doorstone of an abandoned house as in a walled-in garden. Loveliest of all are these when planted at the orchard's edge, and the pink below reaches up to the pink above in a harmony of colour, and a grace of line that leaves nothing to be wished for.

Hundreds of tulips belong to my May garden; the late kinds—left over, as it were, from the April World's Fair—and it must have a row of the old favourite Crown Imperial. It is a stately plant, holding itself "high and disposedly" like the dancing of good Queen Bess, and, to use Pet Marjorie's phrase, "all primmed up with majestick pride" because of the pearly drop of nectar hidden at the base of each petal. For show only are the dull red and yellow things planted, as for show only we ask certain persons to our dinner parties sometimes, and our receptions often, not because they are interesting, or pretty, or bright, but because of an obsession regarding them which makes us like to see their names in the list of our guests! Why? A woman's reason—Because!

For love only are the cowslips planted, since they have no great beauty of their own. It were folly to deny that their charm is that they were the chosen flower of the greatest of poets. Were our ears but fine enough perhaps we could hear Ariel singing as he swings in their freckled bells, singing of the good old days when fairies danced on the green, and the world was not so old and sad and wise as the world we know. It is all very well that men have cast the parallax of stars, and have made electricity into a handmaid, but to see the kindly little people at play in the moonshine, and to hear the horns of elfland faintly blowing, that would be very well also!

Between my cowslips of many colours, little clumps of dwarf iris shall grow, and against the almond hedge—or at least within such nearness to it that they shall appear to be close to the lovely, bending pinkness—there shall be a long, long row of flags, the royal banners of the conquering sun. These shall be the great white Florentines, or *Germanicas*—the same flower is accredited to both Italy and Germany in various lists—with a thick planting of the white Spanish iris, and some tall clusters of single white columbines, to give grace to the stiff ranks of flag leaves. Beyond shall be another field of banners wherein shall be planted standards of many colours:

> "Blue flags, yellow flags, flags all freckled,
> Which will you take, yellow-blue or speckled?
> Take which you will, speckled, blue or yellow
> Each in its way has not its fellow;"

That was Christina Rossetti's feeling! In one of his most intimate passages Fredéric Mistral tells us of his own passion for yellow iris, and one needs but to turn the pages of his best loved books to find how dear the flower has been. And the reason is not far to seek. The more one studies it, the less one knows, yet the more completely one falls beneath its spell. It seems to be a condensation of water, rather than a product of the soil, and to carry hints of frost in its grey shadows. The markings of its petals are occult; the suggestions of its stains, mysterious; the ermine of its furring a distinction, and its steadfast loyalty to royal colours, purple and gold, and to the white of absolute unworldliness, set it apart as a flower above flowers.

Once fallen under the spell of a single iris, its lover is lost, and his passion absorbs him. The great German flags, the prim English varieties, the strange, broad-petalled Japanese, the queer little Persians, and the delicately fair Spanish are all food for an insatiable greed for more varieties and yet more which consumes him. Happily it needs no great skill to grow them, and they are fond of pushing their crowns out of a wet, rich mould, but they are not particularly averse to either heat or cold, sunlight or shadow. The finest sorts are not very expensive, and all over our dear country are marshy tracts and reedy hollows in which the wild iris shows as lovely a flowering as any Japan ever greets with a holiday. Ferns and tall grasses are the natural complement of the flags, and they are always at their best if they can grow at the foot of a wooded bank, with even the smallest level of clear water close enough to let them look at their own reflections.

It is in May that the snowballs hang out their balls of heavy, greenish-white sterile flowers. A rain is sure to scatter them before they have passed their best days, and in the old days when these Guelder roses grew in every garden plot the country people called it the snowball rain. Sometimes they speak of a blackberry rain also, as a storm is apt to come about the time that waysides and wood-edges and old stone walls, and the dear, delightful Virginia rail-fences (which nobody will ever build again, and which coming generations will never see) are overgrown with the gadding brambles, lighted by their pretty roselings. There is no finer shrub than the blackberry. From the time its strong, purple canes throw their shadows on the snow, through its days of foamy blossoming, its greening, reddening, purpling fruitage, until the last copper-crimson leaf is blown from the stem, it is distinctly decorative and refined. Poor it may be, and hard pressed to find the wherewithal to fashion its raiment or to spread its table, but ungraceful, or inhospitable, or apologetic it never is, and always it is worthy of Whitman's praise :

> "The running blackberry would adorn the parlours of Heaven."

May is the month of azalea bloom, a plant which certainly will share with the arbutus the fate of being killed by its friends—that is, if friends are ever those who are ruthless flower gatherers! It is only with regard to our native plants that I am a high protectionist, and here, alas! my championship of the cause avails it nothing! Men are too busy with steel rails and ship subsidies, and the things electricity will do, and stocks and bonds, and other unsatisfying things, to think of the beautiful wild things which are of so much greater spiritual worth to the commonwealth, but which, having no vote and no lobby, and so no friends at court, must go the way of all the friendless. In a world already overfull of societies for this or that, may there not be yet room for one which will begin a crusade against cruelty to plants?

The crab-apples are out! Pink? yellow? lilac? What is the colour of the life-blood which courses through the veins of their petals and gives them their sacred fire? From whence comes their morning incense?

And dogwood week is here! Since we have strayed from the garden and the orchard into the woods, where can we go with happier feet than to the hillside whereon the dogwoods are spreading the level layers of white bloom against the red bud and the yellow sassafras? Under them hosts of birds'-foot violets and pansy violets are in bloom, and clouds of bluets. There are blue larkspurs there also, and white meadow-rue. What an order is that of the Ranunculids that these should be sisters, and how much would have been lost if it had been left out on that busy day of creation when the green things began growing! From the peonies to the windflowers, from the monkshoods to the columbines and larkspurs, down to the smallest abortive buttercup, what a range! Was there a founder of the family from whom all these variants are descended? Is there, as Buffon dreamed, a single primeval life-growth, or, as Faraday suggested, a simple, all-comprehending element from which all things have been evolved? Is there one purpose, changing, changeless, running through all being, and is that which we are pleased to call a clod, one with that which we know as spirit? Surely this is the large hope which we hear in the song of the May birds, and in the falling of the May blossoms leaf by leaf to the ground.

> "We know in part, the seed must rot to quicken
> And one comes up an oak, and one a lily,
> The whole idea perfect in the germ,
> But what we are, and how we are, and whyfore
> We are the thing we are, behold! we know not."

JUNE

Full-leafed, in pride of deepest green
The earth in the sunlight basks serene.
Where linden blossoms crowded cling
A thousand bees are murmuring :
As showers drift from the gladsome land
With a seven-barred bow is the rain-cloud spanned,
The wild rose yields her sweetest scents
Where hay-cocks pitch their fragrant tents,
    The longest day's too brief for June,
    The night's too short for such a moon!

THE ROSE

JUNE

THE HOT MOON

IF I were wise, or indeed if I were but willing to take a common-sense view of my own limitations, I would leave a blank page in my book, headed by the name of the first of the summer months, and would go on my way sure that June means a different thing for each man and woman who has had Junes to remember; who has Junes to enjoy, or Junes to hope for; sure, also, that each one is content with his own thoughts, and has no need of mine. It is a part of the egotism of everyone who fancies that he cannot well leave the world before he has written one book, that he cannot brook the thought of an unfilled page, and so, when I think of what a garden might be, I turn my back on self-restraint, and begin to cover more paper with raptures.

It is time to close doors. Think! there will be but thirty of these perfect days, and it will be a whole year before there can be any more of them! There can be no business in life more pressing than to wait in the still, green world, and to absorb the young summer with every breath.

"Still?" Again a word is misapplied, for who can call the garden still, when from earliest, greying dawn, and the first lonely cry of the little fly-catcher, there has been one long, jubilant carnival of birds? It is love time with them, and not even what Dean Swift called "high cherrytide" can make them forgetful of the patient mates brooding under the leaves, nor win them from the happy task of lightening the world with their songs. To speak the names of the birds is to bring back old, unheard melodies, and to hear the voices which answer to the June roll-call is to be transported instantly to the Land of Pure Delight,

"Where everlasting spring abides
And never fading flowers."

June is summer, but it is spring as well, the *fortissimo*, as the hour in which the snowdrop buds in February is its *pianissimo*.

It is well that we need not be limited in space now that June is here, but that on the Delectable Mountains may plant all that we like, since labour here is not labour but delight. Against the hedge of hemlock which is to shut in my garden a thick shrubbery of rhododendrons is to be set. Not the tender, disappointing hybrids, but the hardy Americans, grown in a cold nursery, and shipped to me with huge balls of earth bagged about their roots. There is a scornful jest, that as soon as an American millionaire realises his wealth, he buys a house and sends for a car-load of rhododendrons to plant about it—an amiable weakness, and one for which his sons will thank him. There is nothing finer than the great shrubs climbing the rocks of the Blue Ridge ranges, or which lean over the stones that fret the cold mountain brooks, to smile at their broken reflections in the hurrying waters. Ferns grow about their knees, and beside them the laurels set fire to the matchless lamps of their urn-shaped bloom, "the ten-tongued laurel" of Emerson's love, whose "beaten bosses of hammered silver, beaten out, each petal, apparently, by the stamens instead of a hammer," made Ruskin think of the craftsmen who beat out the sacred vessels of old altars. The restraint and simplicity of line, and the polished and enduring texture, of the laurel leaf made it the Greek symbol for lasting fame; and as for the blossom-balls it tosses so lavishly at the feet of June, pink with a hundred crimsons, and roses, and pale morning colours, white in a dozen greys and blues and greens and pearls, these are sights to dream of in long wakeful hours of pain and sorrow, and when storms are abroad in the winter midnights.

If the old doctrines be true, and I must enter life after life before the final rest comes, I hope that I may be reborn into the Heath family. Others are more distinguished; others more aristocratic, others more useful, but there is that in this Order that appeals to some inner sense, giving it that rare value which in an individual we call distinction or charm. Cassiope and Andromeda are not more honoured by having their names written high in the polar skies than in the bede-rolls of this family, nor is the daughter of Priam and Hecuba elsewhere more worthily celebrated. It was reward enough for Peter Kalm that

THE TROUT BROOK

his name has been bestowed upon the mountain laurels; and who was Dr Gauthier of Quebec that the rubies and pearls and scented leaves of the wintergreen should have been given him for his own? Over the world it ranges, caring nothing for men, yielding little to them by way of submission to cultivation, but much in the way of gentle uses and most to the high mission of adding to the world's beauty. No praise can be adequate and no loyalty too sincere.

Against the planting of the rhododendrons and Kalmias I would like to place my peonies, a long, long joy, since between the coming of the stout old "p'iny" of our forefathers' day and the latest Kelway triumph of selection, at least six weeks may be counted. There is no plant which may be more safely trusted to do its duty in all stations of life to which it may be called. Let it alone, and for half-a-century it will care for itself. Give it plenty of air, of sunlight, and of water; top-dress it in spring with a good compost; give it a second dose, well worked in about the roots, as flowering time draws near, and tuck it away for its winter sleep under a heavy mulching, and it will repay you tenfold for your care. I do not know a more satisfactory plant, and I rejoice in the attention bestowed by those whose efforts to spread beauty may not be wholly unselfish, but who are our benefactors none the less. With the first warm stirrings of the heart of April, the peonies will pierce the soil with their strong wedges, whose upthrust tells of a vigorous self-knowledge and a masterful will. Then comes the wealth of foliage cut, polished, grey, olive, bronze, which Miss Jeykll likens to the amalgams of Japanese metal workers. Thus does the peony prepare the stage for the final effort upon which its thoughts have been fixed from the beginning. The little buds—such marvels of adjustment and economy of space—grow into big hard balls, which almost as a matter of course must have suggested some such ideas as Mr William Coles wrote down in his "Adam in Eden, or the Paradise of Plants." "The peony," he says, "having some signature and proportion with the head of man, having sutures and little veins dispersed up and down like unto those which environ the brain, when the flowers blow, they open an outward little skin representing the skull," the peony being, therefore, in the symbolic medicine of that day, "very available against falling sickness."

In spite of this, however, the peony is eminently the flower of good health, and there are certain people of whom I am always reminded by it; people who are delightful at a dinner party, but from whose presence in sickness or sorrow one shrinks as from a blow. Charming, well-dressed, graceful, generous, opulent, the peony is for robust health and honest animal enjoyment, not for sentiment.

It is for the sentiment that made me plant the dwarf flags in April, and the Florentine iris in May, that I would have as many of the late flowering iris as possible in my June garden. Named for the rainbow, and dedicated to St Geneviéve, it is no wonder that they were the chosen emblems of kings, and stood for courage, and chivalry, and high endeavour. They carry their history in their faces, and a bed of them is a battalion of swords and a blazonment of many banners. Like flights of Cingalese or Brazilian butterflies; like wonderful tropical orchids, they flutter in the warm breezes. No wonder that where the shadow of *Fusi Yami* falls into blue water as its white crown rises into the blue ether, ladies, like fine *netsukis*, walk with hushed delight through the iris fields! No wonder that plain country housewives, who have little time to care for mere beauty, still cling loyally to the bunches of "blue flags," with falls of royal purple, and wings of delicate azure. May is iris month; but it is in June that we must go to the marshes planted not for us, but because

"Other eyes than ours
Are made to look on flowers,
Eyes of small birds and insects small,
The deep sun-blushing rose
Around which the prickles close
Opens her bosom to them all,
The tiniest living thing
That soars on feathered wing
Or crawls among the long grass out of sight
Has just as good a right
To its appointed portion of delight
As any king."

It is hemmed in by ferny thickets under oaks and pines, where club mosses and partridge berries grow, and where there are white waxen bells of winter-green and pipsissiwa. Marsh roses lean over the peaty, sedge-green hollows where the iris are blooming. Tens of thousands of them stand there in the warm sunshine. Some of the flowers are as deep in colour as the darkest violets, some are as pale as the faintest harebells. When the wind ruffles the hollow, or when, after a passing cloud is gone, the sun shines suddenly into it, there is a wonderful joy of colour. Later, I know, the fringed orchids will hold up tall candles of white, or orange, or pale lilac, among the heavy-headed pitcher plants, and later still, among the white boneset and purple asters and marsh golden rod, tall cardinal flowers will glow, and fringed gentians will haunt the silence of the marsh edge; but the June iris day is a day by itself.

In gardens now white lilies are ablow. Long rows of them stand forth in the virginal purity of dewy mornings as they stood in the garden of Mary, who held a stalk of them against her breast as she bent her head to listen to the Angel of the Annunciation. I think much about lilies. I do not put my thoughts into words, because I cannot.

Yet even without trying to set down my lily-dreams I may try to tell of an old lily garden where the rich loam had been lightened by much sand, and where the cold north and north-east winds are fended off by a high brick wall. Creepers of all kinds grow over these ancient barriers, and there had been some attempts to train fruit-trees against the comfortable background. I do not think much was gained in the way of finer fruits by this treatment, but the bees found their way early into the garden for the summoning peach blows; and to have early bees is a great thing. There is always some planting of the early flowering bulbs, some daisies grow there, and primroses, and there are always a great many things with good smelling leaves, but the gala days begin when the Madonna lilies begin to bud. Every third August the old plants are lifted, divided and replanted in soil that has been carefully prepared with much wood ashes; each has a handful of clean sand about it, and so the two long rows which are all that the garden master allows of this variety is always in the best possible condition for flowering. To keep up the stock he has a little school in one corner of the garden, in which young roots are set to mature, being removed to the ever lengthening rows when they are old enough to bloom.

Behind and between, and before the Madonna lilies, many other varieties are set, because, alas! even in this June-worthy spot it cannot always be June! Clumps of the white and the rose coloured Japan lilies grow against the wall, and many, many gold-banded lilies. A few Harris lilies grow there also, but not many, and in the farthermost corner stand tall, red or orange or salmon coloured lilies, with recurved petals and many-flowered stalks. There is, however, an interval of shrubbery between these, so that the pink blossoms are not lessened in value by the nearness of opposing colours. A great many ferns are planted in this border, and so are pale lilac foxgloves and larkspurs in every shade of blue, the two plants growing together in unbelievable harmony. They come from another nursery-bed where biennials and perennials stay until transplanting time, and where so many provisions are made in case of any emergency, that it is never thought wise to keep the old plants in the border after their best days are over. They are, therefore, added to the compost heap if they are free from defect; if not they go on the bonfire, lest blight or pest be spread therefrom, mayhap.

The colour effect of the myriad of white or pale gold or deep pink lilies, with the infinite blues of the larkspur, and the lilacs of the foxglove bells, is a thing beyond compare. After these go to the Place prepared—who can doubt it?—for good and faithful plants who have done their duty lovingly and faithfully here, tall phlox, in white and pink colourings, which have been growing unobserved among the lily stalks, come into eight weeks of loveliness. Once, when for a time the pink lilies were removed to another part of the garden, African marigolds took the place of the phlox, and Shasta daisies made a border, so that the white of the late-flowering lilies and the gold bands of the auratums were repeated a thousand-fold. In some years asters are bedded with the lilies, purple and white asters. Never anything with a red flower enters the garden; never anything that suggests a greenhouse, or a fear of early frost. At the end of the wall there are four or five hemlocks, and three white birches.

This is all of the garden visible from the porches or windows of the house. It is not a rich man's garden, and it is a small one, but it is perfectly satisfying.

Even in my dreams I should be slow to think that I could add to the praise of the rose. It speaks all languages, as Emerson tells us, and all languages have spent themselves in their homage to the flower which has the world's heart for her own. Here and there are stray souls who cleave to other idols, but to the most of men she is what her name implies—the flower. Where, or how, this befell we know not, but we are told that each of the Four Great Peoples of Asia chose a variety of the rose as its emblem, and if this be true, who can say but that man's passion for this flower may not be a part of that past by which he is bound to his remotest ancestors in a thousand different and unsuspected ways? The rose of a hundred leaves was the type chosen by the Indo-Germanic stock from which we are sprung, and it is pleasant to think that it is not the tenderest personal association, not æsthetic delight, but a feeling far deeper, that makes the heart stir at the sound of her name. Each one of us has a list of favourite words which we say over as a private litany of our own. I, for one, would think but ill of one from which the name of the rose were left out.

High priest of the goddess—yet only a quiet clergyman in a cathedral close—Dean Hole takes this for the text of one of his garden sermons :

"If a man would have beautiful roses in his garden, he must have beautiful roses in his heart."

Were my purse but as full as my gratitude is deep, I should like to print and scatter broadcast the works of this Dean of Roses, binding up with them St John's vision of the New Jerusalem. As a Tract for the Times how much they would teach of patience and contentment and gentleness and all sweet courtesy and brotherliness. I would have liked to listen to the hymns and canticles of a service of his ordering. There would have been :

"By cool Siloam's shady rill
How fair the lily grows !
How sweet the breath beneath the hill
Of Sharon's dewy rose."

REFLECTIONS

And the wonderful mediæval garden song:

"O Mother, dear Jerusalem!"

And George Herbert's

"Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,"

And oh! so often! some portion of St Bernard's hymn with its passionate refrain,

"O sweet and blessed Country
The home of God's elect!
O sweet and blessed Country
That eager hearts expect!"

And the text would, I am sure, have been about the time of singing birds, and considering the lilies, and so worth spending a fair summer morning for.

How could earth have satisfied him who wrote, "There should be beds of roses, baskets of roses, vistas and alleys of roses. Now overhead, now at our feet, they should creep and climb. New tints, new forms, new fragrances should greet us at every turn. If I had all Nottinghamshire full of roses, I should desire Derbyshire for a bedding-ground."

What could quench a passion like that? The Tenth Commandment must shrivel up before such a whirlwind of desire, and yet who could call that a sin which only meant that there can never be roses enough in the world? In fancy we can conjure up the grassy alleys between rose hedges along which are marshalled those brave regiments, each in a uniform of his own choosing, and bearing the proudest names. Personally I do not care for the names by which the roses are known to the *cognoscenti*, or to the rosarian, but there is something very touching in the association of the name of man, or woman, or place, with a blossom, and it is thought to be adding crown to crown to call a rose for a queen. Long after a warrior has fought his last battle the rose which bears his name and title is an ever-living medal of honour. Marechal Niel—what did he do? I have not the faintest idea, but I shall be long in forgetting an ancient *crêpe* myrtle leaning over a crumbling wall in a sleepy, tide-water Virginia village, whose shining foliage was half hidden by a pink mist of bloom, and this, in turn, was forced to escape from under a wealth of the pale gold roses which are called by his name. I have seen no portrait of General Jaquemenot, but there is a bush in a still valley in Maryland that publishes his fame in a June glory which makes a portrait unnecessary. I have no doubt but that Madame Plantier was the most charming of her sex, or why is she remembered, year after year, by the flowering of the great, sweet, white, amber-hearted roses found in all old gardens worthy of the name? Paul Neyron was hardly an enchanter, but from his counterfeit presentment in the garden of gardens at Mount Vernon arises such an all-encompassing cloud of fragrance, as passing into the memory, lives there in secret crypts, whence it issues at unexpected hours, and brings back the sunshine that filters through the trees upon the greensward that lights the quiet river into silvery reflections, and touches the far-off hills with a benediction of peace.

That our forefathers cared little for rose-names even although their homes were set about by

> "Sun-flecked roses by the score
> More roses and yet more!"

we may guess when we know that the first catalogue was made by the rosarian Rivers, in 1831, and gave only a modest list of four hundred and seventy-eight names. Even there we look in vain for the musk rose of Shakespeare's praising, nor can we with certainty identify the eglantine, which Chaucer and Spenser thought so fair. Perhaps it is better that we have no absolute knowledge of these two roses, and we can think into them colour and fragrance such as Keats found on the Elysian lawns where

> "All the daisies are rose-scented
> And the Rose herself has got
> Perfume which the earth has not."

When I think over the rose gardens I have known I hold two in supreme regard. Over one, old elm-trees hung fringing shadows lightly over walls of box clipped so closely that it seemed as if the broad level tops could easily bear one's weight if one walked on them swiftly down the long alley which led to the sundial and so divided the roses into two distinct groupings. Standards stood about on picket duty. Hybrids covered plats and formed hedges. Small plantings of Hermosas gave promise of perpetual succession of bloom, and glorious masses of tea roses lifted their delicate blossoms among the strong crimson and copper foliage of their new wood. Prairie queens, Baltimore belles, seven sisters, crimson ramblers, and a host of climbers and trailers grew along a sunward lattice, and the stones of the wall which enclosed this paradise were covered by Wichurianas, and by the hybrid sweetbriars which are "thrice crowned, in fragrant leaf, tinted flower and glossy fruit." Nothing else grew in the garden, but nothing else seemed needed. The rose sufficed.

On the other garden I came by chance. In the pearly dawn of a midsummer morning when the trees of a rough bit of marshy country were but half awake, and the ferny pastures were grey with the dews that were as yet untroubled by the sun, the single prairie roses were blooming. Robins were singing of them; song sparrows were giving thanks for them. In thickets, in clusters, in specimen plants, covered with masses of blossoms which ranged in colour from deepest pink to purest white, with many tones of blue and lilac shadow, the roses bathed themselves in the freshness of the day which should have been set apart as a state holiday that all men everywhere might have leisure and opportunity to see such an intimate revelation of the divine. Only—if rose day had been set apart by Act of Congress it would have been vulgarised by excursion trains and their attendant horrors, and even the opalescent dawn could not have thrown over the blossoms such a veil of mystery and purity as touched them, flowering in the lonely waste. The very heart of the blue summer weather beat softlier there, and it was hard not to believe that their Maker had not paused for an instant in the vast workings of everlasting plans to smile down on the lovely, unheeded things He had made.

"It is curious when you come to think of it how large a space the rose idea occupies in the world," muses Mrs Wheeler. "It has almost a monopoly of admiration. A mysterious something is in its nature, a fascination, a subtle witchery, a hidden charm other flowers do not possess." It certainly possesses the charm of individuality, since there were never two petals curved with the same grace, and never a leaf but is pointed with a coquetry all its own. Each thorn tells its own wilful tale, and each wind-rifled blossom fallen on the grass carries its own burden of fragrant sadness. Beside the poorest cottage door the rose will bloom with every whit as good a will as by a palace wall. It is her divine simplicity which makes her queen of hearts.

In the old gardens of the day before our own the rose was at its best. Not the varieties that are the pride of the florists' arts and crafts, but the old free bloomers that old-time people knew and loved. Madame Plantier with her lovely offerings of white, apricot-flushed, yellow-stamened blossoms; cabbage roses, oldest of types, since it was the favourite of the Rome of the Cæsars; banksias, the hardy little Scotch roses; the old-fashioned yellow rose, with small leaves and few petals, making

"Sunshine in a shady place";

the old Giant of Battles was there, and the yet older George the Fourth, so deep in colour as to be almost black; the York and Lancaster; the broad-petalled, sweet-breathed old June rose, which overgrows ragged lawns with its sturdy little bushes, and last and best the dear, dear damask rose, with its hundred leaves.

What a list! Yet where are they now? Even the *pot-pourri* in which they lived a second life, since

> "Of their sweet deaths are sweeter odours made,"

has gone out of fashion.

Still, in sheltered homes in byway villages there are even yet women who compound the delicate blending of scents that are treasured in Chinese jars, or old painted French urns, and that their secrets may not be wholly forgotten here is a recipe of their cherishing.

"Gather the roses on a fair clear morning after the dews are dried. Take them into the spare chamber, on the floor of which fresh linen sheets have been spread. Crumble the leaves [petals] gently from the hearts of the roses, and sprinkle the sheets thickly with them. Open the window towards the sun until evening. The next day the leaves will be so withered that what filled two sheets may now be spread on one, and fresh-gathered leaves may be strewed on the empty spaces. On the third morning the leaves will be still more dried, so that you may gather up the first day's roses and place them in an empty basket. Stir occasionally, and every day add to them the leaves dried to the proper texture. When all are dried, prepare a bowl of sweet spices, which shall contain small bits of dried orange and lemon peeling, sticks of cinnamon and buds of allspice, cloves and cassia, bruised. Add a tonka bean, cut into fine shreds, and much violet-smelling orrisroot, grated. A grain of musk is liked by some, and amid so many divine perfumes is not obtrusive. Of handsful of lavender be not sparing, nor of the sweet leaves of the rose geranium, and of dried sprigs of citronella as much as you may. Now into your jars place rose leaves and spices alternately until they are lightly full. Put on the covers, which are to be removed when the room needs refreshing."

Can you not see the *pot-pourri* makers, with their smoothly ordered hair and fair calm brows, and their delicate hands busy with their task? What gracious dames, what gentle spinsters, thinking no evil, remembering no wrong, hopeful, wrapping the sorrows the years have brought them in a reticence that was itself fragrant with the hoarded scent of many roses, sharing the joys of their uneventful life with a cheerfulness which was a *pot-pourri* of itself. To make *pot-pourri* is, I take it, a test of gentle blood, and more things are needed than rose leaves and spices to properly fill the Chinese jars, which the old-time ladies handled so tenderly.

When I die I shall have gone through life and out of it with a wish ungratified—a wish which has followed me through all of my conscious years. It is to have a button-rose for my very own: to hold it in my hand, and put it in a vase—a glass vase—and to look at it and love it until it begins to show faint signs of withering, and then to press it in a book to keep for always. It has been ages since I saw one of the stiff little bushes that bore the fairy roses, and more ages still since I saw one of the flat pinky-crimson roselets. I never touched one. I do not know if they were fragrant, since between the very small person which held my eager soul in those lost years, and the scrubby little plants, which grew only in one border that I knew, there was a great gulf fixed, which I dare not think of passing. On my way to and from school I hung on the picket-fence which bordered the gulf, hoping that the mistress of the strip of garden in which the button-roses grew would come out from the prim house door and break off a branch for me. The house door never opened, and the miracle never eventuated. Once I saw her stepping about among her flower beds, her skirts held forbiddingly about her slender figure. Linen mitts covered her long hands, and a sunbonnet hid her face. Evidently she did not belong to the order of old ladies whom children of my day ever ventured to address, but as my desire had never even dreamed of fulfilment, and as Opportunity and I had never met before, I choked back the lump in my throat in order to be able—when the expected moment arrived—to express my thanks properly.

"*Now*," thought I, "she is going to say: 'Little girl, would you like to have a button-rose?'"

A lifelong love and gratitude was ready for her had she but so spoken. No; all she said was:

"I do not like to have children hang on my fence."

Whereat I climbed down and fled. There

are no fences now, they say, in the village in which the button-roses grew—but if they were there, and I were there, and my garden had in it only one flower, I would offer it to any little child whose heart hunger for beautiful things led it to imperil its life on my picket-fence in rose time.

At the end of the garden which I long for, a gate in the wall leads out into a lane along which, as evening draws on, slow lingering figures of young men and maidens pass. Older figures pass also, enjoying the twilight in the perfect confidence of long-married love. Over the tangled hedgerows lush growths of the evergreen honeysuckle, twin-flowered, send out clouds of perfume to mingle with the potent sweetness that falls from the blooming wild grapes which lace the wayside trees together with a tapestry of wonderful grace and beauty. In all the range of precious odours which bless the world, beginning with the violet and the crab-apple, there is none that compare, with their combined essences, and if, in the alembic in which they are transfused, there be also the dear drenched freshness of sweetbriar leaves, they are mostly of the throbbing June dusk, lit by the evening star, and voiceful with songs like this :

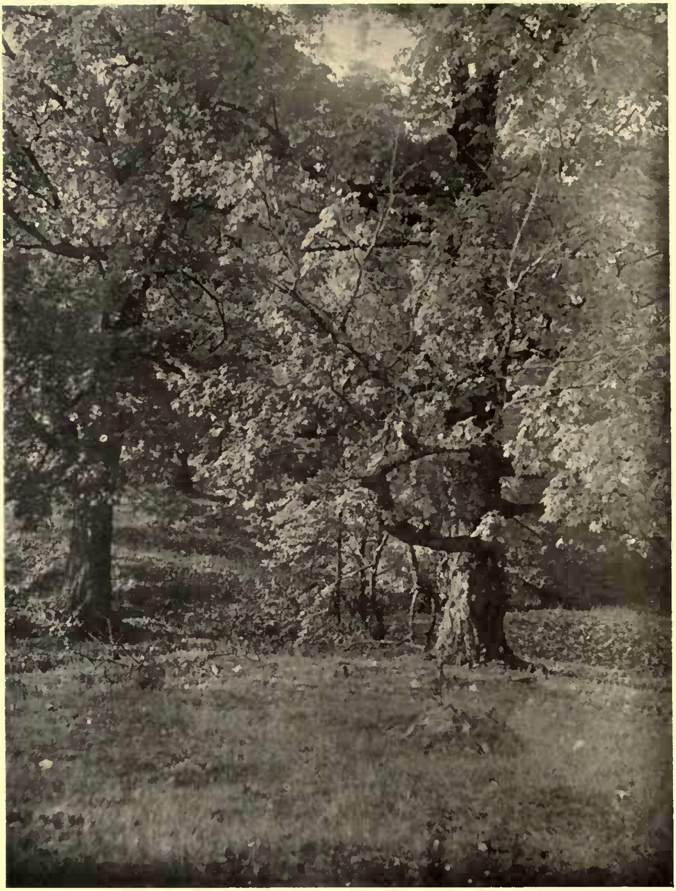
"Slow from the sunset sky
Soft colours fade and die ;
Ashes of roses lie
On Day's grey altar.
In far, dim depths of blue
Slow stars come into view
—World-old, but ever new—
Nor change, nor falter,
Good-night !

" Here in the garden still
Waking, a late bird's trill
Sets every pulse athrill
With June's own passion.
Sweetbriar, a country maid,
Blushes in fragrant shade
Of her own heart afraid
Wooed in such fashion,
Good-night !

" Around the casement twines
Shelter of twin woodbines
Pale there thy taper shines,
Now it has vanished !
In night's fields, slumber sown,
Sweet be thy dreams, my own.
Give me a dream alone—
All others banished !
Good-night !"

JULY

Beneath the full midsummer heat
Are stooks of golden garnered wheat ;
Are billows of unripe oats, grey-green ;
Are armies of corn blades, trenchant, keen,
The killdeer flutes his mournful cries
The hawk in charmèd circle flies
Berries ripen beneath the leaves
And warm and still are the musky eves:
        The moon shines bright in the cloudless sky,
        The crickets sing—and the night birds cry!



MAPLES

JULY

THE MOON OF THE DEER

ALL winter we long for summer. We shut our eyes to the beauties of the snow, and of the bare trees, and cry "Oh, for the time of singing birds!"

It is not July that we mean when we speak of summer. After we have passed the years when, as good Americans and true, Independence Day, with its lights and noises and excitements, fills us with joy; after we have learned that love of country is a thing so deep, so quiet, so sacred that it can never be put into words, we do not care for the midsummer month, and would be glad if it were possible to curtail it to a February shortness. The almanac men would have done far better had they doubled the number of the days of April and May, June and October, and had halved or even quartered the allotment of some of the other months.

There are, to be sure, July days worthy of Emerson's lines—

> "Oh, tenderly the haughty day
> Fills his blue urn with fire.
> One morn is in the mighty heaven
> And one in our desire."

But these do not come every day, and, when they do, belong to the wide landscape and the far horizon, not to the garden.

However, since July is here, it must have such a garden as it may. The big brushes which were put away in January must come out again, and the colours must be laid on in wide washes. The palette shall be set with the yellows and blues that, rightly blended, shall mean the greens I love. There must be plenty of cool greys and purples for the shadow, and white for the few flowers I shall care to plant. I do not think a July garden need care for any other flowers than white ones—unless I can find a few blues cool enough and distant enough to suggest the far-away hills for which the tired soul longs in the days when the heat palpitates as an unseen flame about us. There will certainly be none of the yellows and scarlets of the Philistine. The world hardly needed William Morris to tell it that red geraniums were invented solely to show that even a flower could be hideous, and, for myself, I need no warning but the shudder of my own soul to tell me that the flare of cannas is little short of an immorality. There is one other flower from which I shrink as from a blow, and that is the scarlet sage—salvia—a flaunting braggart! It is as impossible to evade its insistence as it is to avoid the sound of a megaphone. It is the visible demon of a flaunting commercialism, the very type of all those things from which a sensitive soul must draw back. As the Blessed Damozel leans out from the gold bar of heaven, it is easy to fancy the seven lilies lying along her arm. As our thoughts are lifted higher, it is with no irreverence that we think of Mary as the rose of womanhood. In the green pastures and beside the still waters of the Psalmist, and in the hymns of the Middle Ages, many and many a blossom lifts up its head and exhales the very breath of the Celestial Country, but I do not think it could enter the mind of any man to think of finding salvias there.

If the paper garden needed space in January that there might be heavy plantings of white pines to fend off the north wind, how much more does it need it now, that there may be shelter from the sun and a playground for such winds as may be wandering about in search of a home! It is beginning to trouble me, this greed for space which I am developing. Once I would have been happy with a visible, tangible box of honest black loam—the

"Long green box of mignonette"

which belonged to the Gardener's Daughter—now so insatiate are my desires that I must have a field or two beyond my hedges, a river beyond my fields, a hill beyond my river, and above and beyond the hill a wide stretch of cloudland. To such a pass hath covetise, unchecked and unabashed, brought me!

Once upon a time a July and I went hand in hand through a garden. There was no one else to share it with us but Neglect, but when Neglect does its best it makes a very fair under-gardener to Mistress Nature. There was plenty of space there, and plenty of green, so with what freshening rain St Swithin chose to send us, and with the air that flowed in from the hill country beyond, there was nothing left for the trees and the grass and the flowers to do but to grow. I took many lectures in landscape gardening that year. I learned more than one of those esoteric mysteries of grouping, of selection and of reclamation, which are at the root of all successful planting, and I had more than one lesson in the art of the harmony due to contrast.

Between the unkempt lawn and a rarely-travelled lane there had once been a fence with some pretension to elegance. I imagined this from the height of the square brick pillars standing in dignified decay along the border line, and covered to the very crest of the stone cups-and-balls they bore, with gadding vines and with mosses. I never saw the fence, and the ironwork of the gates was a matter of guesswork. Two or three elms were left of what had once been an avenue; there were a few ancient cedars in the corner where the lane left the forgotten highroad, and a wilderness of white-blossomed althea bushes crowded themselves about the grey knees of the old beech-tree whose dead top was overhung with Virginia creepers. Four or five fountainlike growths of Eulalie grasses outlined an overgrown path which led toward an opening where once had been closed gates. Somebody had left these open overnight once upon a time, and a branch of evergreen honeysuckle had thrown a wandering arm across one, while the English ivy of the farther gatepost had made haste to seize upon the other. Nobody had taken the trouble to think of the gates since about that time. Neglect, who had been but a chance visitor, took a permanent lease of the premises, and one by one the tendrils of the vines had woven about them a cordage far too strong for any wind to break, and so, over these green entrances the white, clustered roses ran riot, and made a pretty strife with the blossoming grape vines to see what might be happening in the lane. Against the north wall of a ruined greenhouse a long bank of Funkias spread their green cordate leaves, and disposed their stalks of white, heavy-scented blooms. That was all, but it was business enough for one summer to listen to the play of the winds among the tree tops; to study the shadows as they came and shifted, and stole away; to watch the slow blossoming and fading of the few flowers, and to breathe the air that made it worth while to lengthen the day by being in the lane before the dawn left it.

Once, in those languid days, I made a little list of the people I should like to have share my garden walks. For the dawn-hour I chose three—Chaucer first, because of his rapturous greeting of the daisies; Jeffries next, because the dayspring itself was his, to have and to share; Corot was the third. Already he had opened my eyes to many things which have always been before them, but which, but for him, they had been too full of day glare to perceive. In the misty half-hour before sunrise what could he not point out to me! How cool, how vague, how silvery white-and-green all things would be! The little leaves, refreshed by the stillness and darkness as much as by the dews, would offer, each one, his pearl of dew to the returning day. The cool grey clouds would be reflected in the water of the pond, over which willows would lean, and on whose banks, to the singing of half-awakened birds, fauns and nymphs would have just left off dancing. No haste, but all pale, refreshing tints and peace and rest and recreation.

It is only when we have left youth behind us that we come to a full understanding of the values of dawns and twilights. They linger so much longer than noons or midnights, and show us so much more that is truer and lovelier, and so belong first to the days when we have no idea of proportion, and then to those in which we know what it is. Youth is to age what the blossom is to the tree; everybody knows that; but where would be the tenderness of the one without the battles the worn old bough has won in its many militant years? Young folk need that lovely connecting link with the past which can come only from contact with old people, as an apple blossom needs the sap from the old tree. Perhaps the trees have their legends for their children, and it may be telling their runes and sagas, when we say the wind is passing at dawn. At midday, in mid-life, there is no time to think of things like these, but

> "In green old gardens hidden away
> From sight of revel, or sound of strife,"

the hours bring each their lesson.

DAWN

"The colours of an opal faint and flush
On the pale sky, wherein one lambent star
Lights in the Hours. In the expectant hush
The low tide sobs against the hidden bar.

NOON

"Dawn vainly longs for, and Midnight regrets,
And Sunset emulates Noon's splendid strife.
Noon, overborne with restless toils and frets,
Envies their charmed stillness. This is life.

SUNSET

"'Tis not the dying Day that paints the skies
With green and crimson, purple and pale gold:
'Tis Father Past, who thus in state doth rise
Another son to welcome to his fold.

MIDNIGHT

"The moon rides high, the skies are cold and grey,
The earth's asleep; the waves are murmuring:
To-morrow, smiling, takes from Yesterday
The worn old crown of countless discrowned kings."

I think I said I should have a white garden for July. I am sure it should be planted chiefly with the respectable hardy sisterhood who are like efficient spinsters in their ability to care for themselves, and like notable mothers of families in their cheerful endeavour to make everybody comfortable. When July heat broods over the world no one has energy for transplanting and coaxing, and all one is able for is a wholesale sprinkling at evening. Even the weeds cease to be the disgrace they were in June, and too often what promised to be a well-ordered *parterre* becomes a tangle of rough grasses or wretched little cheese mallows, or still more wretched purslane. The hardy plants do more than all the patent weeders or cultivators ever invented to solve the problem of order and neatness. To be carefully planted in good soil, deeply spaded, and finely powdered in the fall; to be covered in by a mulching of litter during the winter, and to have some bone-meal dug about their roots in the spring—these are the few and paltry attentions asked by the good biennials and perennials, and surely these are not extravagant requirements!

In even the limited space afforded by an ordinary suburban or village garden plot, a succession of white bloom may be ensured by planting from this list which I have treasured for ever so long in my desk-garden—

Snowdrops, crocus, hyacinths, narcissi, violets, Star of Bethlehem, tulips, candytuft, English daisies, trilliums, bloodroots, iris—Spanish, English, Japanese and German—lilies-of-the-valley, columbines, fraxinellas, peonies, phlox, Canterbury bells, foxgloves, Achilleas, feverfews, larkspurs, balsams, verbenas, Shasta daisies, China asters, pansies, petunias, mallows, nicotinas, hollyhocks, dahlias, anemones and chrysanthemums. Of this list only three are annuals—balsams, China asters, petunias; none ask for any particular coaxing, and none are very costly. For shrubs and small trees with white flowers there are, beside the roses, dogwoods, magnolias, rhododendrons, lilacs, fringe-trees, hawthorns, spireas, Philadelphus, privet and hydrangeas. For climbing plants, clematis—the native Virgin's bower—the *paniculata*, and some of the broad-petalled hybrids, the charming evergreen honeysuckle, the morning glories, wisteria, *var alba*, the moonflowers, and the sweet Madeira vine.

The true garden is a thing of slow growth, and a place in which the individuality of its owner is shown at its best. Sentiment, crushed down and kept out of sight elsewhere, must here have full play. The plant bought for money is worthless except as a starting point from which many paths may trend into many ways, since, by the generosity of its nature, it makes instant provision for that multiplication which openly admonishes us to share its good with our neighbour. It represents far less value, at best, than the plant given from love, and this in turn is only higher in order than that which has been acquired by that pleasant system of barter known to all diggers and delvers in the soil. Once let this spirit of exchange enter, and it becomes a passion to drive about through country byways, and to stroll along village side streets, making mental notes of the things which have learned to accept those climatic conditions to which our own treasures must subject themselves, and that soil on which they too must feed. Then, when time is ripe, to return with a basket of the roots which we can spare, and of which we have marked our neighbour's lack, and we enter with a proposal to drive a bargain. What kindly, friendly chats ensue! What ready sympathy is evoked! What a strife as to which shall give, not get, the more! How much better the world is than we had thought it, and how much good will there is all about us! With what cordial glances we greet our new friends when next we meet on the highroad, asking after their garden as if after their families. Perhaps we fall into the habit of sending them a packet of pansy seed or an auratum lily bulb at Christmas, and perhaps, when they drive into town, they bring us a "taste of their seckel pears." Such widenings out are inevitable, significant as well. The glorious company of flower growers is ever increasing, and for them should be a special clause in the *Te Deum*, since, being of those who make the world brighter and gentler, more unselfish, more contented, more pure in heart, theirs is surely a most apostolic ministry and vocation.

The very best gardens, from the humanist's point of view, are those unpretentious little ones which cuddle up close to the eaves of weather-beaten farmhouses, and those which are hidden away along the streets of those blessed villages which have kept themselves aloof from the seven devils of modernism. There is rarely a master to these small domains, but there is almost always a mistress, who has lived long enough to have much treasure laid up in that sweet and sacred place, wherever it may be, where good pasts are kept safe until "the day of the restitution of all things." Here are found those humble livers in content who figure in no nurseryman's list, but which are priceless in their wealth of association — heirlooms, as it were, by which she tells her life-story, and if she will but tell us whence they came we may make a bede-roll of the friends she has loved and the places she has visited. It is she whom we see in the railway cars and on the decks of summer-faring steamboats with her basket of plants, and her little sheaf of slips. We smile, but why? Every slip will grow, because it knows she loves them, and every root will make haste to duplicate itself that she may enjoy the privilege of giving. So she passes through life and out of it, and long, long afterward her name is kept dear in a way the old hymn-writer did not dream of when he said—

"The sweet remembrance of the just
Shall flourish when he sleeps in dust."

In these calm retreats live also the old flower-names which "express their relation to humanity, while the scientific names are a necessity for schoolmen." Not every gardener has the same nomenclature. What is larkspur in your garden may be lark's heels in mine, and Elijah's chariot across the way. Your monkshood may be my Cupid's car, or my sister's dumble-dore's delight. Forget-me-not appeals beseechingly to us under half-a-dozen guises. Ragged robin and bachelor's button are names borne by at least twenty widely differing plants, and honeysuckle and pinks masquerade under at least as many. That which we are apt to call cornflower has, it is said, over fifty *nommes de plume*, ranging from the Old English hawdod to the rustic break-your-spectacles. Almost every nook and corner of the land from whence our speech came to us has been remembered by its home-sick children in connecting it with some beloved plant, and every holy season and saint in the calendar has its emblem. To "Our Lady the Virgin" whole floras have been dedicated —Marybuds, Marygold, Maidenhair, Virgin's bower, Dame's rocket, Madonna lilies, Annunciation lilies, Lady's tresses, Lady's fingers, Lady's slipper, Lady's smock, Lady's kirtle, Lady's mantle, Lady's delight, and so on, endlessly. In a lesser litany other saints have their flowers, under the leadership of St Geneviéve, the patroness of all flowers, whose own emblem is the iris. St Joseph has a lily; the cowslip, or *schlusselblumen*, or keys of heaven, falls naturally to St Peter, while the amaryllis is allotted to St James. The leek, as all men know, belongs to St David, as does the rose to St George, the thistle to St Andrew and the shamrock to St Patrick. To St Agnes is dedicated the black hellebore, although lovers of Tennyson will always associate with her that

"First snowdrop of the year"

which lay on the breast of the nun, who under St Agnes' moon prayed for the purity of its snows. To St Gregory belong the daffodils, which used to be locally called Gregories, from their punctual flowering on that saint's day, the twelfth of March. Wherein lay the sympathy that gave St Dominic the harebell for his own and who was the Archbishop of Canterbury who chose the lily-of-the-valley,

THE MEDITATIVE WALK

which had for an alias, once upon a time, the dainty name of liricon fancy? The Canterbury bells were dear to Thomas à Becket, and in the Sweet Williams,

> "With their homely, cottage smell,"

we see the saintly William of Rochester.

The birth of Our Lord is commemorated by the Christmas rose and the flowering of that Glastonbury thorn which was said to have been the miraculous springing into life of the pilgrim staff which guided Joseph of Arimathea to England. The Star of Bethlehem is the flower of the Epiphany season, and Lenten days are daffodils and narcissi, by their old name *Laus tibi.* A green hellebore, with its German name corrupted into Krichblum, grows in a few out-of-the-world corners, and is called a Lenten flower. For Palm Sunday the young shoots of willow called sallows were formerly much used, together with the wood-sorrel, which Gerarde called *Alleluias.* At Easter, nowadays, everything that hath breath joins in praise, but formerly the ranunculus or Pasque flower was given and received as a token. Pentecost has the Guelder rose and the azalea; pinxter flower or pfingsten. At

Trinity-tide the shamrock and the *viola tricolour* set forth the proper lessons. Birds, beasts, fishes; mythology, history, geography; the virtues and vices—what have not been linked to the flowers? From what far sources have come the names dear and familiar to us; how in our English speech we have kept but one from Celtic days, maple; and two, hawthorn and groundsel, from Anglo-Saxon; what we have adopted from the Indians who lived here before us—all these belong to a subject too difficult to engage us on a July day.

If one must have colours in July, there be colours ready to his hand—unless one be of the disagreeable brotherhood who are not content to wait until proper seasons arrive, and who plant sweetpeas in March or, worse yet, in October, that they may come earlier than anyone else's. Sweetpeas should be in their glory in early July. Deep planting, careful stirrings of the earth about the tender stems, early opportunity to climb the cotton nettings—which are far better than the wire ones, on which the stalks are often scorched—plenty of water, and most assiduous cutting, never plucking, of the blossoms—these are the requirements of sweetpea culture. It has gotten to be a florists' flower now, more's the pity! They are forced for Easter weddings, and they are "improved" until only the scent remains. Twisted, curled, they are said to "look like orchids," as the last triumph of the special breeds. Why should a sweetpea look like an orchid? Why not let the orchid look like itself, and leave to the peas their own delicate butterfly graces? Was not that flower already good enough of which Keats said:

> "Here are sweetpeas, on tiptoe for a flight
> With wings of gentle flush o'er delicate white,
> And taper fingers catching at all things
> To bind them all about with tiny rings."

A proper sweetpea should have a wide flaring, and daintly cloven standard, self-coloured. Its wings should be broad, well curved at base, and curved gently to meet the stout keel. Three flowers only should be grown on one stalk. When cut—and they are eminently a flower for cutting—there should be cut with them a few tips of their own foliage. No other green should ever come near the blossoms, which are like the dawn for purity of colour, and like nothing but themselves for deliciousness of scent.

Phlox, with what Maeterlinck calls its loud laughter, is an invaluable July plant. Its story is so short; it is such a little while ago that the reddish-purple phlox of our swampy glades began to respond to the cultivator, that it seems a type of certain dominant influences which we dare not decry since we owe too much to them. For eight weeks, perhaps for ten, sometimes for twelve, we can rely upon the phlox to keep the garden gay, a virtue it shares with almost no other plant. The snapdragon, with its gorgeous wayward colours, is another midsummer darling, most trustworthy in every regard, and the poppy makes a third to this admirable trio. Mrs Earle heads one of her chapters, which are the delight and despair of every garden writer, "Joan Silverpin," a pretty and provoking name, which, however, lacks all that the older word poppy means to us. There is something heavy-headed and drowsy in the word, which suggests the languid grace of the stems, the drooping of the sleepy buds and the sensuous charm of the silken blossom. A long, long train of beautiful thoughts which men have had about this mysterious flower, with its poisonous heart, and its sunny face, come singing by, and we repeat its name, and it needs all of its colour and all of its life to rouse us from the dreams which will but barely end when the wind rifles the drifting cloud of poppies and, white or scarlet or pink or pale silver, the last crinkled, crispy satin petal falls from the stalk. With the passing of the poppy, July is gone.

AUGUST

Over the blue sea broods the heat;
In faintest pulses the tired tides beat;
Over the sands, with the sun aglow
Silent, the cloud-shades come and go:
A white-winged sail on the water gleams;
Faint and far like a Ship o' Dreams.
The Year's great Sabbath fills the air
And slumber and languor are everywhere
    Then storm winds rise, then breakers roar
    Then wrecks are tossed on rocky shore.

CHINA ASTERS

AUGUST

THE STURGEON'S MOON

MONTHS are said to have their complements in precious stones, why have they not also their representative colours? It would seem as if Nature had arranged for the dwellers in temperate climes a delicate chromatoscope in which we may read the passing of seasons, as we tell them by the wheeling constellations of the Zodiac. In January there is the white of the snows, and in February the bronzes of certain leaf buds, or the ochres of stubble fields. In March we look up, not down, and we see the blue of the sky filled with prophetic gleams. In April the colour of the first violet is the only wear, and for May that wonderful symphony of pink that means that the true bud-break of the year has come. June means roses; July lilies. In August we long for the green of grass and of sheltering trees, and in September the yellows of countless blossomings speak for themselves. October means crimson, and November? I think November means the deep green of pines, forgotten in the heyday of the summer's splendour, but steadfast and true, a gracious, benignant presence to which we may return, forgiven prodigals, sure of the pardon of which we are not worthy. Scarlet, the colour of Christmas, ends the list.

For August, therefore, I choose green for my garden, which shall be a formal garden, and have in it the four things Sir William Temple declares "necessary to be provided. Floures, fruit, shade, and water," and in it, to quote the good man once more, I will "shote strong and tenacious roots." I will have caught hold of the earth, to use a gardener's phrase, and neither my friends nor my enemies will find it an easy matter to transplant me. What has indoors, anywhere, to offer in August?

Formal gardening is, I take it, the desire of man to infuse somewhat of his own personality into the growth and disposition of trees and plants. The old story of the hanging gardens of Babylon as having been the gift of a royal husband to a much-loved wife who longed for the hill-country of her childhood, and who, in the pleasaunces upreared on vast bases of masonry found a symbol of the land she had left, is most significant. In it lies the germ of all gardening. The water that plunges into the basin of many a fountain, in many a classic land, does not attempt to do more than suggest the wild leap of down-rushing mountain torrents. The long channels of pure water led through Spanish pleasure-grounds, lulling the senses by their gentle flowing, wooing the birds by their cool sparkle, and nourishing the life of the oranges and myrtles that lean over them, are no counterfeit of the untamed rivers that carve their way through hills and valleys, but a frank adaptation of their spirit. A fountain, upspringing, downfalling, rainbow-tinted, musical, does not exist anywhere in nature, but responds to some human desire, or it had never been possible. Clipped trees and hedges whose growth have been restricted and thwarted until they are like the fantasies of Hamlet's disordered vision: deciduous trees—coaxed into unnatural habits of rounded heads or pendulous branchings—these are of that art which Goethe calls nature passed through the alembic of man. Not for alway nor for everywhere, but for sometimes and for some places, is the formal garden. And August is surely the time.

For such gardens flowers are not wholly necessary, they are a by-product, the chief requisite being much green—grass first, as furnishing the background upon which the picture must be painted; the key to which the harmony must be set.

There can never be grass enough anywhere. In one or another of its forms it is certainly the highest achievement of vegetable life. Divinest of givers—like man in its little day, like God in its loving service—the common grass is the truest comforter to broken hearts, the most effective teacher of patience, and cheerfulness, and humility, and self-forgetfulness. Under its safe shelter we leave our heart's dearest: to its faithful care we creep, ourselves, at the last. I should like to think that some time I should not be covered by grass, but should *be* grass, and that this body, which after its poor best has served me so long, should, by sweet, natural processes, be quickly restored to that from which it came,

MORNING GREY

and that my hands and my eyes might live again in the breathing, happy leaves, on which the dews should sparkle, and from which the spider's web should float in glistening silver and which should be white with rime at frost-tide.

There are to be beech-trees in the open glade beyond the clipped hedges, their grey boles so flecked with lichens that they are a part of that green which makes the beech the coolest and most companionable of summer trees. He is to be pitied to whom August brings no memories—if it brings no sight—of the fluttering garments of great beeches, half-revealing and half-hiding the slender grace of their delicate limbs. For grow they ever so great, and live they ever so long, there is a perpetual youth about them, and a most charming coquetry for ever animates their boughs. It is among beech-trees that one hears in late August evenings an occasional bell-tone from a hidden wood-thrush into which "the soul of a year's music is distilled into a few drops of sound." It is in beechen shade that a certain shy little flycatcher sings his delicious strain, so far away, so near at hand, as if he were singing to himself in a pure joy of being, and in loving praise of the trees.

The outer hedge should be of *arbor vitæ*, tall, old, and heavy with the masses of tiny cones which hang over the fruiting trees like mantles of richest embroidery. I do not know why it should suggest gorgeous priestly vestments, but it does. Perhaps the aromatic fragrance that envelops the tree like an unseen cloud of incense creates the illusion. It is, indeed, one of the most beautiful effects to be imagined, and, as *arbor vitæ* is neither costly to buy nor hard to grow, it is nothing less than a shame that we are so poor in the hedges it makes. Not a low hedge, but a high, strong barrier, through which we may, if there is anything worth looking at beyond, cut an archway here and there for a vista. Not many plants care for the close proximity of such a hedge, but within a reasonable distance grass will grow, and hemlocks or cedars or yews, or retinosporas may be set, either for clipping or for specimen growths. Beyond these again, in what long alleys or in what fanciful device we will, box, the eternal, may be grown if the climate be friendly, which, alas!

it is not sure to be in many places. A ragged hedge of box is a sorry affair, for which it is much better to substitute English ivy, pegged down and confined within fixed limits. It makes a lovely border for walks, and for large beds, as does also the periwinkle or vinca or myrtle. Covered with its angled blue stars in April, the myrtle is charming, while its deep green glossy sprays are invaluable during the cold days of winter. Here, too, the cost is practically nothing, since everybody who has a rod of earth to cultivate knows of some abandoned farmhouse around whose deserted doorstone the myrtle has crept and matted in thick tangles which are at anybody's disposal, and which will take hold of any new soil to which they may be transplanted with all the good will in the world. For a ground cover under trees anywhere, this good, old, tested green is unsurpassable.

In my garden plot, rhododendrons shall be banked against some stone steps which shall lead down from the terrace above. In August the not-too-beautiful offerings of their far-too-often purplish blossoms are past, the plants are busy with the fashioning of the pointed buds into which they are packing the stores needed for another year, and the looker-on has time to admire the stately leafage of the shrubs themselves. An ancient garden favourite, which is exceptionally fresh and young in this month, when insects and blights do chiefly flourish, is the matrimony vine, a nuisance if it be not trained and pruned, and a joyous fountain of green branches if it is. Yuccas are interesting in the formal garden. The fine columns of their glistening silver flowering are gone, but the stiff bayonets of their leaves are delightful, set along the edge of a terrace, against a planting of the Eulalia grasses which are such a contrast. The yuccas do not care for much water, and so are especially good in poor and sandy sites, but they should never be left without some care in cutting away the spent flower-spike and the old leaves.

Another comfortable August plant is the Funkia or day-lily. Its few white blossoms have an exquisite freshness, and for fragrance are hardly equalled, while its corded leaves, broad and cool, are good indeed to see. Year after year the clumps grow in beauty and stateliness, loving a partial shade, but caring more for plenty of water to drink.

I like grass paths, even in box-edged gardens. The sharp contrasts between the greens of hedges or the blossoms of plants, and the greys and browns of gravels are not pleasant. To be sure grass paths are damp after a rain, or a heavy fall of dew, but shall not the overshoe men have a chance to make an honest living, and is life so short that we cannot spare a moment in which to slip off and on the rubber sandals by whose aid we may defy all weathers? Stone walks, laid in blocks of different colours, are almost as bad as were the pavements in the garden of Erasmus on which the taste of that day painted representations of flowers! Grass paths sympathise with all kinds of garden efforts, and are the complement of every flower. They ask only for frequent clipping and rolling to serve you better and better as age toughens and strengthens the sward.

By August the ferneries have lost the crisp freshness of their prime, more's the pity, and more's the pity, also, that certain wild things —the natural companions of the ferns, in the glory of our deep, northern forests—refuse to adapt themselves even to the green shades of the greenest gardens. Pipsissiwa is one of these ; a most charming plant, and the shin-leaf is another. The wintergreen belong to the same sisterhood. All of these belong to the great family of the heaths, which have a habit of clinging to the haunts and ways chosen by their forebears, and, as, notably in the exquisite trailing arbutus, claim the right of selection due their high lineage. It may be that occasional plants survive transplanting, and make themselves at home amid new environments. I do not know. Perhaps it is just as well that man should stand abashed before the stronger wills of some of these delicate aristocrats. Perhaps it is better than well that, instead of seeing them in humdrum garden beds, cheek by jowl with jolly-faced marigolds or flaunting tulips, "those flowers who are true clients of the sunne," we must seek them in their proper homes. Everything loses something by being dissociated from its natural surroundings : that is the lesson of Emerson's "Each and All," which is the one perfect answer to many questions.

For August gardens there are two perfect

THE HILL

flowers—the heliotrope and the mignonette; perfect because neither of them takes anything from the repose of the place on which one would gladly be

> "Annihilating all that's made,
> To a green thought in a green shade."

On the contrary, both bring with them supreme gifts. Cowper tells us that it was in the year of his majority that England first saw the Frenchman's darling, which surprises us, because we had seemed to have associations which reach into a much more remote past. Living or dead, it is eminently a flower of sentiment and of refinement, qualities recognised in that verse of Bret Harte's "Newport Romance" which appeals more perfectly to the ear than to the eye.

> "The delicate odour of mignonette
> The remains of a dead and gone bouquet
> Is all that tells of a story: yet
> Could we think of it in a sweeter way?"

It is impossible for a garden to be overcrowded with mignonette, and as for the heliotrope, the turnsole, no planting could be lavish enough to satisfy its lovers. Nor could there be too much of another most scentful treasure of old gardens—the citronella, or lemon verbena. It is rarely seen ; it does not grow for everybody, and it has its own high reserves. I have long had a fancy that it would only content itself under the care of those gentlewomen whose lives are spent in the quiet and fragrant corners as yet untouched by what we call "the world." Engaged in the cares of their well-ordered households ; remembering the Sabbath and the poor ; careful ; frugal toward themselves, yet royal in their generous thought of others ; fresh with the dainty freshness of well-laundered linen—in a word, the pure in heart, who see God everywhere, are the ladies for whom the citronella grows. They grow other things also, these lovely types of gentle womanhood—lilies-of-the-valley, little double white daisies, myosotis, clove-pinks, little pink Hermosa roses, little white violets, rose geraniums, and small-flowered pink and white and yellow chrysanthemums ; but they always have a bed of mignonette, and a plant or two of heliotrope, and always, *always*, when they say good-bye to a guest, at the doorway to which their old-time courtesy has attended her, they stoop down and break off a twig of citronella, which she carries with her as the sweetest benediction.

I should like it if one corner of the White-paper Garden could be set solely as a place for scents; to have a garden which should rival that most fragrant spot which Hawthorne describes as Wordsworth's garden. Wordsworth, we know, said:

> "I believe that every flower
> Enjoys the air it breathes."

Why not gather together those heavenly breathings into a new small paradise? It need not be a task of so great difficulty as to discourage even those happiest of all gardeners, who beg clips, and exchange roots and seeds, and wait for years for the coming of a certain iris, or the flowering of a tardy shrub, and it could be arranged in even a small enclosure. That it be enclosed, I take it, is a necessity. To expect the full charm of even the hardiest plants set out in the unfriended open, with boys and cats and dogs and rough winds to visit them at will and to harry them at pleasure, is as foolish as to ask a child to carry the bloom of its babyhood through a youth passed in a hotel. First, last, always, I cry out for barriers, fences, hedges, walls, anything that will give the flowers the privacy, the reserve, the protection which it is their mission to teach a world in danger of forgetting the lovely ideals that made the old days dear and sweet.

Here, in the sheltered spot, the plants and shrubs must be massed to secure what, for a better word, we may call volume of odour, and there must be careful grouping, that those coming into bloom about the same time may blend their fragrance. Under that lonicera,[1] which flowers before the leaf buds start, and that Daphne, whose purple blossoms open before the last long wreath of snow is melted, white and purple violets must be planted. Dig in fresh soil every second year, divide and reset the violets, and leave the rest to April. Under the lilacs lily-of-the-valley may be left to its own devices, and under the early, sweet Philadelphus, commonly called mock-orange, small white and mottled pinks will be glad to grow, and, on the sunny side, clumps of yellow day-lilies. It would be a pity to leave out the calycanthus, or strawberry shrub, dear to children, and place must be made for the clethras. If there is room for a tree, let it be a crab-apple tree, and if there is a wall, plant sweetbriar and the evergreen honeysuckle beside it. Roses should be chosen solely for their odour-giving properties, and lilies will care for themselves. So will the sweetpeas, if they have a string lattice to cling to. By midsummer the air is full of the wine brewed by the precious mints, the pinks—all kinds of pinks—heliotropes, some peonies, some phloxes, mignonette, "the bee-alluring thyme," rose geranium, one of the clematis, and certain green things, angelica, artemisia, marjorum, rue, rosemary. Earlier have been the tall heads of an old favourite, called Greek valerian, and a rocket called hesperis, which with small flowers and sweet alyssum make a sweet trio of cruciferous bloom much to be prized. Some pale-coloured verbenas are of a most refreshing and vernal sweetness, and there are citronellas and certain musky-leaved plants not to be found in any catalogue, but which I would search for in forgotten corners where I know they still cling to life. Always the garden may hope for the shy flowering of an occasional rose, even after rose time is over, and as the year grows old we are strengthened and prepared for the bitter pungency of marigolds and chrysanthemums, and far into the days whose morning grass is grey with frost, and in the gardens are desolate

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[1] Fragrantissima.

> "Bare ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang,"

the violets are faithful in their blossoming.

This is the month of the night garden. It is the time for fireflies; those ascending stars which glow in the almost tropical twilights that are ours. To sit in the warm silence and watch the momentary upward gleaming of these living candles, is a pleasure not to be lightly held. As they flame out against the mellow darkness, the young moon shows us the steadier lamps held up by the night-loving plants that lure the night moths with their pale radiance and their heavy scents. The moonflower on the lattice is whitened over with broad discs of honeyed sweetness; the nicotina, a disconsolate thing enough by daylight, rouses itself at sundown, and opens its five-pointed stars with much the same coquetry that a *grand dame* of fashion prepares for the opera or for a ball. The evening primrose is one of the most interesting of American plants, and white and yellow four-o'clocks are most satisfactory. White petunias are at their best after the shadows begin to fall, a certain plebeian quality innate to the flower vanishing with daylight. "A candlelight beauty" was the phrase once used to describe a woman whose charms were beginning to fade, and it is not a bad one to use with respect to the petunia. There are, it is most true, many other white flowers which are almost more lovely in the soft, silvery moonlight than in the full noontide, but they do not belong to August.

If, after all this special pleading, the August gardener cannot be content without colour, there is a full palette for him to choose from. It is the fashion to decry the so-called "foliage plants," for which I have a small liking myself. Yet, why? The yellow-leaved things always suggest decay, it is true, and the parti-coloured ones blight, and the spotted-leaved ones various insects or unwholesome soil; but there are white, woolly-leaved centaureas, which are really beautiful, and there are self-coloured coleus whose deep wine-crimson are lovely. There could be no place in garden of mine for stonecrops and alternanthias and achyranthus, but there would be sure to be places where a hedge of tall, bronzed cannas would be both useful and imposing. The green varieties, and those bearing flamboyant red and yellow flowers, I should always class with caladiums, and salvias and red geraniums, but if I were careful to clip off the flower stalks before they had a chance to show their pitiable red petals I would be sure of a good background for my dahlias and for the hardy chrysanthemums—in August only a bushy promise.

Can I have forgotten the morning glories which are at prime when the dew-drenched mornings begin to have a feeling of the coming fall in the air? Gay gossips in pink and blue sunbonnets, eager to see, to show, they climb the fences and laugh out their sunward greeting in a way to banish sorrow from the saddest heart. Theirs is the song of Pippa—

> "God's in his Heaven
> All's right in the world."

And theirs a divine commission of cheerfulness. But for an hour, truly, yet into that hour how much good will and sweet friendliness, how much brave beauty and helpful service! There are convolvulus and ipomeas by the score—lovely almost all of them, but the best of all are the old, cool friends who won their pretty name long years ago.

Snapdragons are true Augustians, and are of a most lavish and gorgeous flowering. Blue is the only colour absent from a bed of these plants, whose season of flowering is longer than that of any other plant of importance. The gardeners have so improved the varieties that there are more and more shades and combinations of shades in the spikes, that lengthen and ever lengthen.

Better than the snapdragons are the phlox, now in their splendid prime, and better than the phlox are the hollyhocks, towering imposingly at the end of the paths, and along the edges of the shrubberies. Here, again, we may look for every colour but blue—white, blush-rose, red, crimson, prune, yellow, copper, and a dozen shades for which we have no really descriptive names. Set on tall spires of pale green, with calyx and leaves of a most effective woolliness—there is small wonder that the hollyhock is ever the painter's flower. None composes better, and none, it seems to me, gives a more comfortable sense of home. Yet it does not care overmuch for culture, growing quite contentedly in deserted corners. Indeed the finest display of any flower I ever saw was in the yard of an abandoned stone tenement house in an old mill-town. Perhaps they had had things their own way for a dozen years; perhaps for twenty. Certainly they had made the most of their liberty, and the yard was a condensed flame. With the snapdragons and the larkspurs and the phlox the mere thought of the hollyhock is a joy to the heart of every garden-bred child.

And every child should be garden-bred, and no child should be cheated out of his heritage to garden joys by any pretext whatever. Nothing can make up to him what he loses if he loses that: nothing is of any value compared with the treasures enjoyed and laid up in the long hours spent in that one companionship which can never harm nor pall. In after years, in alien places, next to the thought of our

THE RIVER

father's face and our mother's smile, it is the old garden where we played to which the soul looks backward—and forward, since that which hath been shall be.

When I think of children in gardens, it must be confessed that I think of little girls. Boys belong to the larger world of fields and woods and the hardier joys of trapping and nutting and fishing. Orchards belong to them, but I do not think that the smaller, more orderly domain which fills the common idea of a garden appeals seriously to a healthy-minded boy. In the cherry-trees, among the strawberry beds, or the melon patch—or even in a turnip field—there is something to be done by way of gratifying that perpetual hunger which is a part of being a boy, and to which nothing comes amiss. Flowers, however, mean but little to them. They like to go for water-lilies, because there is the water, there is the boat, and there is an almost certain opportunity to become both wet and dirty. They like to go for ferns or laurel, because there are the woods and the rocks against which to try their strength, and there is the absolute necessity of tearing their clothes in getting the armsful of fronds or of blossoms which ministers to the primal acquisitiveness of their race. A garden however means restrictions and limitations, scorned by boys, but accepted by little girls as a part of the eternal feminine.

If any proper garden such as everybody's grandmothers and aunts used to love, the whole summer was none too long for the things small hands found to do. There was a tree, always a tree, there, with low-hanging branches, under which the little women kept house, and there they lived that mimic life which, to such little women, is so absorbing and so real. Bits of gaily painted crockery were hoarded there, and perhaps some fragments of a broken mirror. Some snail shells, some bits of quartz, or lichened rock, some sods of dark green moss—that was all, except the imagination, that converted these properties into an adequate setting for whatever game might be in hand—

> " A wedding or a festival,
> A mourning or a funeral."

" If there are no games, what is left ? " cries Tolstoy, but there are games in plenty. Violets are turned into soldiers or duellists by interlocking their heads, and having a tug-o'-war with their stems. This is the one flower game that I can remember in which boys ever engaged, and this only, I fancy, because of the shuddering horror of the little girls at their blood-thirstiness. Boys never cared to hold buttercups under each other's chins to see if they were fond of butter—they knew that already; nor did they puff themselves black in the face to learn from a dandelion ghost if their mothers wanted them—that they would learn all too soon without questionings. But with the aid of these golden fancyings, which are a part of children, the little girls found whole summersful of things to do in the garden. If dandelion stems are split back to the blossom, and the bitter strips are warmed for a moment in the mouth, curls can be made which will instantly transform copper-brown heads into blonde curly ones. Months later, much finer wigs may be made of cornsilk, and the striped grass called gardeners' garters will always turn one into a mermaid, if the drama in hand be Hans Andersen's *Little Mermaid.* A basin of water tinted to a proper blue by the surreptitious borrowing of the family indigo-bag is ocean enough for the fairy shallops made from the petals of the iris, the fall making the hull, you know, and the standards, with a thorn or two, acting as sails. The hulls of milkweed pods, being much stronger, may be driven about in the wilder waste of waters found in the watering troughs by the gate. The finest balls in the world are those of which the holly-bush ladies dance minuets, and fandangoes, to the delight of the chaperons, who sit about in the full dress of a larkspur bonnet, or a hood made from a four-o'clock. Four-o'clocks themselves make most beautiful ladies, by pulling the skirts of half-a-dozen over the little green seed ball which makes such a satisfactory head for the chosen one. Balsam parties are not to be despised. The guests do not long retain the cool freshness of their petticoats, it is true, but long enough for a dance or two and the serving of the banquet laid on acorn plates, and poured from rose-hip tea-things. Wafers made from the silken inner tissues of honesty and mallow cheese were their favourite dainties in the long ago garden days that were mine, and, if the occasion were a patriotic one, torpedoes were ready to hand in a crumpled rose petal, and cannon in the spent tubes of the morning

GREY TWILIGHT

glory, or the elastic pods of the lady's slippers. I wonder if such delicate feasting is still to be found, and if little girls themselves dress for paying visits as in the old days? Do they link together the blossoms of the phlox into necklaces, and earrings and bracelets? Do they wear gloves made of trumpet-creeper flowers? Do they sew with foxglove thimbles, and drink tea from Canterbury bells? Can they fashion delicate wreaths of pink, or white, or blue from the slender horns of the larkspur? Have they patience to separate the fine membranes of the "live-for-ever" leaves, and then fill the little purses so formed with water? They are good for nothing, it is true, for they will not stand upright, and the water spills out if they do not, and if it did stay in, what would that avail? In a garden there is time aplenty, thank God! and in the morning glow no one asks that a thing be useful to be worth while. There is leisure even for the blowing about of thistledown, or for tracing the flight of the fairy sails that carry the seeds of the milkweed far through the unhasting air.

SEPTEMBER

In fallow fields the goldenrod
And purple asters beck and nod.
The milkweed launches fairy boats,
In tangled silver the cobweb floats:
Pervasive odours of ripening vine
Fill the air like a luscious wine.
The gentian blooms on the browning waste
With coral chains is the alder laced
        The blackbirds gather, and wheel and fly,
        The swallows twitter a low "Good-bye!"

GOING TO MEETING

SEPTEMBER

THE HARVEST MOON

THE garden keeps up a lifelong quarrel with the calendar men. *They* say that June, July and August are the summer months: *it* says that summer begins when the first snowdrop hollows out a silver vase for itself in the snow, and begins to ring that chime whose music only the purest hearts can know, and which even they cannot share with another, and that summer ends when the last chrysanthemum is gathered. September, therefore, is a summer month, with a perfect right to its wealth of flowers. For her the June dawns and July twilights were planning, for her the hot August nights were at work, as well as for the Indian corn, which the farmers say they can hear growing while the moon, dimmed by sultry vapours, goes languidly from sky to sky.

The Indian corn! Mondawmin, mahiz, maize—how the beautiful, generous plant lives in these names! Where did they come from? What did they mean to the first red-brown men who spoke them? There must be many lovers of our America who regret that so few such links are left to bind us to the old races who were here before us. It was a most pathetic and tender trait in our ancestors which led them to try to see in the wild growths of the land of their exile some likeness to the flowers of the old gardens and old fields and copses they had left behind them, and so to perpetuate the old names. It is a pity, beyond words, that they overlooked the opportunity, which can never come again, for knowing the aboriginal names, and that the little knowledge that we have is so widely scattered that no full or convenient lists are to be found. Perhaps we exaggerate the probability of the existence of a full vocabulary of plant names among the Indians. If we ask one to-day for the name of a flower, it is ten to one that he answers "wauwausquane—not good for anything," and we learn our first lesson: a plant not to be used as a dye, or a food, or a medicine, is nothing—only a flower.

Such of the old names as are left have been subjected to the fate of the words of all unlettered peoples, and were reduced to writing in such form as were suggested by their sound to English, French or Spanish ears, and were often made unnecessarily clumsy by their spelling. A certain wild beauty clings to the syllables, properly inflected. It is easier to say pond lily than ókundunmóge, but the older word has a cool, marshy sound quite in keeping with the still, shadowy waters, haunted by heron and by kingfisher, in which the white flowers open to the sun. The "mountain-strolling lilies" of Meleager carry their orange-coloured flame with the same wild grace as the American muskótípineeg, and the word innináutig, the tree of trees, is a delightful name for the sugar maple. Wild strawberries have a most delicate flavour if we call them ohdamin, and those dear little pink blossoms, so loyal to the woods that they almost always perish if taken from their shelter, are sweet as spring beauties, but sweeter far as miskodeed.

Four aboriginal words have been adopted by the scientific world in naming our native plants—catalpa, maize, or mahiz, yucca and

Sequoia, the latter in honour of a Cherokee who invented an alphabet and taught it to his people. Popularly, many words are happily retained, as catawba, and scuppernong for certain grapes, and, used as adjectives, we find the Chickasaw plum, the Atamasco lily, the Missouri currant and aster, the Osage orange, the Seneca snake-root, and so on. Over our heads as we walk in the budding woods the soft fringes of the tamarisk are trembling, and the tupelo is unfurling its flat fans; under our feet the aromatic, gummy leaf scales of the tackemehack are fallen. The silky dogwood is the kinnikinnick, and the movre wood of the main coasts, and the willow herb of those hideous charred deserts which follow the footsteps of the murderers of our primeval forests, share the odd word wykopy.

The white fruits—black-eyed, with a certain jewel-like quality—of the cohosh shine above the mossy banks on which the fragrant pipsissiwa is blooming. The yellow puccoon or alkanet is abloom on the prairies—and when fall comes the wood's edge will blaze out with the scarlet wahoo — or Indian arrowwood. From the berries of the black holly, or yaupon, the famous black drink was brewed, and although tobacco is tobacco the world over, to Hackluyt it was vpponoc. The persimmon holds fast to its old name, and so does the chinquapin, while pecan is a pure Indian word for which no interpreter is needed by any Greek or Italian fruit-vendor.

Only one plant, a reed-grass, ever achieved the dignity of becoming a token, or tribal sign, but it was while I was making sure of this that I came upon this charming pet name for a baby, "gohana" ("a hanging flower").

Of very many plants the word Indian is used compounded with another noun in our common speech. The opuntia is Indian fig, the wild arum, called by New England children Jack-in-the-pulpit, is the Indian turnip, and the canna is Indian shot. One of the few scarlet flowers is a dianthus known as Indian pink, and the painted trillium, least balmy of flowers, is Indian balm. Why other tobacco than real tobacco should be called tobacco at all I do not know, but one of the lobelias is Indian tobacco. One of the groundsels is called squaw-weed, and one of the broom-rapes is known as squaw-root. The blue cohosh is also called papoose-root, and the plantain is still often called by the phrase of ill-omen to the red man's ear, "the white man's foot."

Two shy woodlanders come last, as in a great pageant the post of honour is reserved for the man held in highest esteem. The sight of either may well dignify a day, so entirely do both belong to the highest aristocracy. The cyprepediums of our bluest June weather, swaying their white, or pink, or yellow, or purple slippers, with fluttering untied laces, are the Indian moccasins of long-vanished races, and in the deep August woods are those pallid ghosts; those austere and solemn blossoms; those flowers of wonder and of fear —the Indian pipes!

So far has one thought of the September cornfields, glistening, rustling, waving, opulent, led me.

The moment the air holds a touch of what Hawthorne calls "the Septemberish feeling," we are intensely aware of an overpowering sense of yellow. Before the month has touched the first ripening leaves with a warning finger, she throws down armsful of flowers with such royal prodigality that the fields and waysides, the edges of the wood, the marshes, and men's limited gardens may all take what they will. There is enough for all, and it is a pretty greed that makes the whole world open its arms to be filled. The sun shines down with redoubled glory because of the floods of sun-colour he sees below, and his happiness is like that of an earthly father who loves to see his own likeness in the faces of his sons.

More and more, it is to be hoped, gardeners will specialise, and more and more the garden will be as carefully considered as if it were a picture, in which every bit of colour must tell not only of itself, but of the harmony of the whole. People will think; will choose; will reject. Everything will have its meaning and the result will be, ah! what will it not be?

A yellow garden would be the easiest of all gardens to arrange, since Nature has made more of her experiments with that colour than with any other, and the plants which bear yellow flowers are far more robust and easily entreated than those whose blossomings are pink or white or blue. It could be made to be a joy while March winds are blowing, and a greater joy when the Thanksgiving fires are lighted. Here is what I should have if the Fates were kind.

There should be a background of irregularly planted conifers—white pines, firs, and hemlocks—which should have grown for many years just beyond a high brick wall, which should have gotten that mellow tone and roughened texture which lends itself to all sorts of colour schemes with a good will that is almost human. If I could not have this I should like to shut out my neighbours by a thicket of high shrubs, the quick-growing elder or the slow-growing dogwood, or the middle-growing sumach,—if I went to the woods for my things,—with a spice bush or two, for the sake of the yellow tufts of aromatic florets which come before the snows are fairly gone. Coeval with this are the Forsythias, Fortunii, suspensa, viridissima, quick-growing, clean-leaved, insect-free, and so in haste to greet the returning sun, with their joy-peal of yellow bells, that the stars have not fallen from the hardy jessamine before they begin to sing. While they are playing a triple bob major, the crocus are abroad, at their best if planted in thick mats close, but

THE NORTH MEADOW BROOK

not too close, to the Forsythia roots. Before they are gone the daffodils are here, and

> "The slim narcissus takes the rain"

in all the lovely variants of the type which men have loved so long and so well. The yellow tulips begin to glow like fire before

> "The shining daffodil dies."

And while they are in their splendid prime the Crown Imperials hang out their pearly diadems. No one will care to cut it, but its decorative value is very great if it is seen marching along the brick wall, behind the tulips, and well beyond the border of yellow primroses. The common cowslip, the common primrose, the delicate hose-in-hose, no one ever yet had a border of them too long, nor ever will—since, if one be not the veriest of Peter Bells, a primrose is not a primrose at all, but is, as saith the golden sentence of True Thomas of Ecclefechan, "a beautiful eye, looking out on us from the great inner sea of beauty."

A good shrub that is being forgotten in the modern rush for new things is the Corchorus or Kerria. Its foliage is exceedingly pretty, and its angular green stems give it an all-the-year round usefulness shared by few bushes. Once I saw it at its best, trained up the sides of a long arbour whose top was a heavy thatch of wisteria. The sunlight played through the purple blossoms where the bees were humming. The Kerrias, like hidden princesses in old fairy tales, tossed their deep orange-coloured balls into the air, which was filled with the clamour of nesting martins. The tiny mistress of the garden stepped daintily along under the gold and purple canopy, nodding her grey curls appreciatively at our praise. " A pretty place," she said. " A very pretty place."

Now come the iris in all their lovely tones of yellow and of brown. So many of them! So free with their gifts! I shall always care more for these imprisoned butterflies since I have read in " Mes Origines," of Mistral's passion for a colony which grew in a ditch in the Provence of his childhood. Twice, within one fateful half-hour, he fell into its muddy depths in vain endeavour to reach the blossoms. Twice he received whippings and change of clothes, but his "hands still itched so to clutch some of those beautiful bouquets of gold" that he went back to the forbidden spot for the third time; for the third time he fell in, after which he was sentenced to bed.

"And what do you think I dreamed? Of my yellow irises, pardi! In a beautiful stream which wound about the farmhouse, limpid, transparent, azured like the fountains of Vaucluse, I saw magnificent tufts of great green flags which flaunted in the air; a veritable kingdom of flowers of gold. Dragon-flies with blue silk wings alighted on them, and I swam about nude in the laughing water. I seized the fair-haired fleurs-de-lis by handsful, by double handsful, and by armsful, but the faster I plucked the faster they grew."

What could be more charming than that phrase "the fair-haired fleurs-de-lis"?

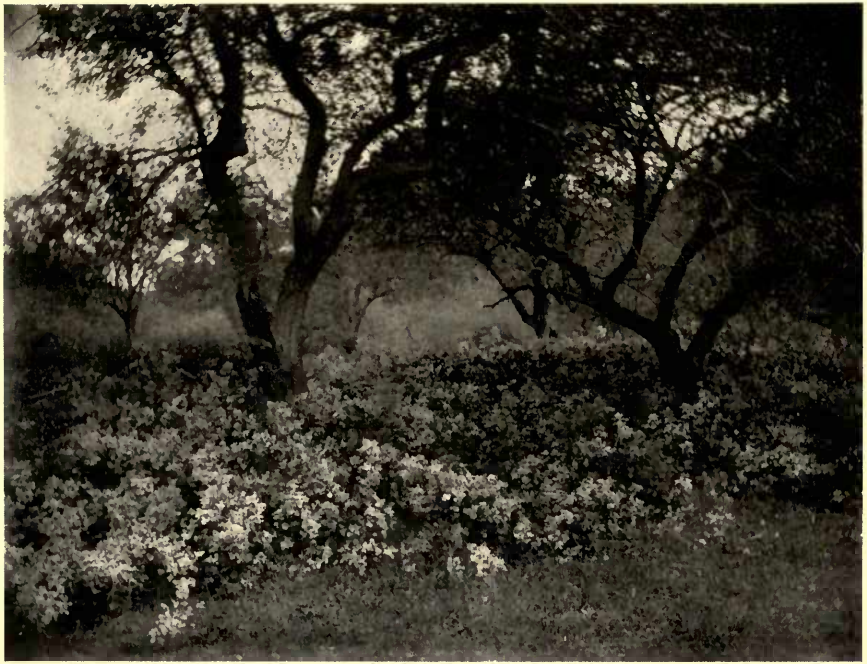
There is a shrubby tree which would be glorious in June, when it hangs out long clusters of yellow papilionaceous flowers. In Austria they call it the golden rain—perhaps remembering how

> "Danae in her tower
> Where no love was, loved a shower."

There are also tall composites which make fine backgrounds if the space given be large. It should be very large indeed to find room for the ubiquitous golden glow! The old-fashioned sunflower was a most honest soul. It was not his fault that certain soulful verse-makers a generation ago cried its praise in the market-place with such zeal that a weary world begged for peace, and it should not be blamed for their lack of discretion. Its corona of cheerful ray-flowers and its broad tanned face long ago became an integral part of September. To us now also belong by right some prim yellow dahlias, and the whole great world of goldenrod. I was not surprised to read that with the grasses and sedges it was the favourite plant of Thoreau, or to hear him say that they "expressed all the ripeness of the season and shed their mellow lustre over the fields as if now the declining sun had bequeathed its hues to them. It is the floral solstice a little after midsummer, when the particles of golden light, the sun dust, have, as it were, fallen like seeds on the earth and produced these blossoms." On every hillside and in every valley stand countless asters, coreopsis, tansies, goldenrods and the whole race of yellow flowers, true sun-loving devotees, turning steadily with their luminary from morning till night. Happily, much as they love to gad along the highways, or to celebrate their souls in fallow fields or beside stone walls, they are quite willing to fill in angles of your garden with their bright wands of gold, and so restrained, are of great colour value.

Long before the day of the goldenrod is the day of the yellow day-lily and the small-leaved, four-petalled yellow rose, which almost never finds its way into a catalogue, but lives on the gift of friend to friend, in farmyards and cottage garden spots, one of the most beautiful of roses. Thorny, scentless, blooming for a week or a fortnight at best, it belongs to that precious sisterhood of which we think when we read of roses in the old poets. And that is, I take it, the highest test of true rosehood.

When these little roses are covering long, bending wands with their shining gold, the yellow pansies are at their zenith. Nothing is better than to plant in many, many yellow pansies between your narcissus, which will, if you chose them carefully, and see that the soil has plenty of sand, plenty of bonemeal, and plenty of sunshine, give you six good weeks full of bloom. The pansies will not only bear them company, but will cover their ripening leaves with a fair pall of laughing colour and cheerfulness, which will last far into the hot weather, and will begin to laugh again when the autumn dews fall on them. Among them have some bulbs of the auratum lilies, I beg you. They will grow quite unperceived until the day of their gorgeous tropical flowering and, that over, they will withdraw quietly, and with dignity. Auratum lilies are most beautiful, also, planted about with yellow Spanish iris, who go the way of all things bright and fair before lily time, after which, if you have a small bed for reserves, you can fill in the bed with any one of half-a-dozen yellow-flowering things —Michaelmas daisies, calendulas, marigolds, or even zinnias, which can now be had in lovely shades of pale yellow and burnt orange. The yellow columbine must have its honoured place in the hardy border beside the wallflower, and a small very double, shining ranunculus, which used to bloom in long ago Mays, snapdragons, nasturtiums, escholtzias, coreopsis—



ASTERS IN THE ORCHARD

these are the things that must be renewed year by year. The dandelion will take the grass under their protection if you will let it, and the moth mullein, and common velvet mullein, will make you glad if you spare their chance-sown seeds.

Americans of the generation after the next will have forgotten that there was ever a need for the naturalisation papers now carried by the broom, which is making itself very much at home in some favoured places. I wish we could have the gorse too—or whin—and I devoutly wish every American who has a bit of wood to guard and hold for posterity would set out some witch-hazel. If we were obliged to send to Japan for this beautiful siren, how eagerly we would offer it the highest seat in our plantations! And as for the mate to the witch-hazel, the dear, common, hardy old yellow chrysanthemum, it were worth while to have no garden at all until its day, so well is it worth waiting for.

Blue gardens have been planned often, and with great success. There are, it is true, no blue flowering shrubs in our temperate climate, but white ones answer excellently. Have spireas, have Madame Plantier roses, have Madonna lilies, have tall spikes of valerian, and low borders of double daisies, and mats of the perennial candytuft. Have plenty of white asters and chrysanthemums ready for the days when blues are not, and above all have plenty of soft grey-green leafage to set off the blues—moss-pinks, lavender, centaurias. Your garden will be then a parure of jewels, sapphires of every sparkling, palpitating, ineffable blue, set in the silver that befits such gems.

For earlier blooming the scillas are incomparable, and the grape hyacinths, if closely planted and left to themselves for a dozen years before dividing and replanting, are very delightful. Blue hyacinths are altogether desirable, but need an abundant high light of white ones adjacent to give their best effect. Personally I care most for a small single variety, seen in old gardens, which throws up many tall, few-flowered stalks from a nest of leaves. While they are here the woods are offering us those charming blues which are so distinctively American, and so easily transplanted. The violet, which is the violet *par excellence* to the world at large, spreads fairy wreaths of deep blue above its heart-shaped leaves, and a polemonium called, as so many plants are, bluebells—or Jacob's ladder—flowers for nearly a month. Drifts of exquisite phlox—the "Sweet William" of the children—blow about in the undergrowths like bits of vagrant clouds, having an extraordinary change and play of colour, and a fragrance as distinctly vernal as that of the primrose itself. The tiny Quaker ladies, or bluets, or innocence, or Houstonia, camps down among the grasses, having a lesson of its own to tell of the value of even the smallest, least assertive plant when shown in masses, and there is a Collinsia, which is innocence also in some places, which is a lovely thing. Other American blues are the mertinsias, hepaticas, tradescantias, the viper's bugloss, and the chicory, whose colour Mrs Clarke most felicitously called "the Wedgewood blue." Blue morning glories and ipomeas will reflect the sky upon your lattice all summer long. Campanulas will give you six weeks of flowering, and the monkshoods can be depended on for a grand showing, the depth of their colour being that of deep water touched by some hidden undercurrent, which produces no waves, but a slow heaving which gives the light a chance to work marvels in its bosom—vincas, Veronicas, the tall blue Lobelia, and the pretty little brown varieties of the same plant, plumbagoes, Browalias, are all good blues, and good bloomers.

> "The blue
> "That never shone in woman's eyes"

glorifies the larkspurs into the best of garden blues, quite another thing from the cold flower of thirty years ago. They have been hybridised and cultivated until the tall spires of quivering blue flame are often six feet high. Their great hardiness and duration of bloom give them a most honourable place in the world. Again I am indebted to Mrs Clarke's penetration when she says, "they give one of those invaluable inflections of colour which are like the grace-notes in music."

It must be accounted a virtue in two of the most exquisite of blue autumnal flowers that they resist all attempts at cultivation, and steadfastly hold to their inviolate freedom. There have been a few successes in the long list of efforts to conquer the fringed gentian and the harebell, but they are not flowers which bloom to order. They choose for themselves, these flowers of the sky, these reincarnations of maidens

> "Who would be wooed, and not unsought, be won,"

but who, in spite of the wooing, elect the solitary way. Who would care for gentians set in a garden bed, or for harebell nodding in a window box? They belong to the rusty sedges of brimming September uplands, to the silence in which one can hear the leaves breathing, softly, as a shower comes down the hills, deeply, as the rain drifts down the valley, and the silver bells of the water-drops come from farther and farther distances. The gossamers are abroad in gentian days, lacing the grasses with cordages of fairy spinning for the dew to thread with pearls, and there are faint, delicious breaths of song from small unknown birds who take the place once filled by the blessed choristers of May. They are too small, too shy and too alert to be readily identified by the aid of the how-to-know books, where, no doubt, the colour of the upper mandible and secondary wing coverts are duly set down for the enlightenment of the student armed with a rifle. How can there be rifles, when rifles mean the taking away of the life of a bird!

How many generations of song and movement and usefulness, and beauty and pure delight are lost when one of them falls!

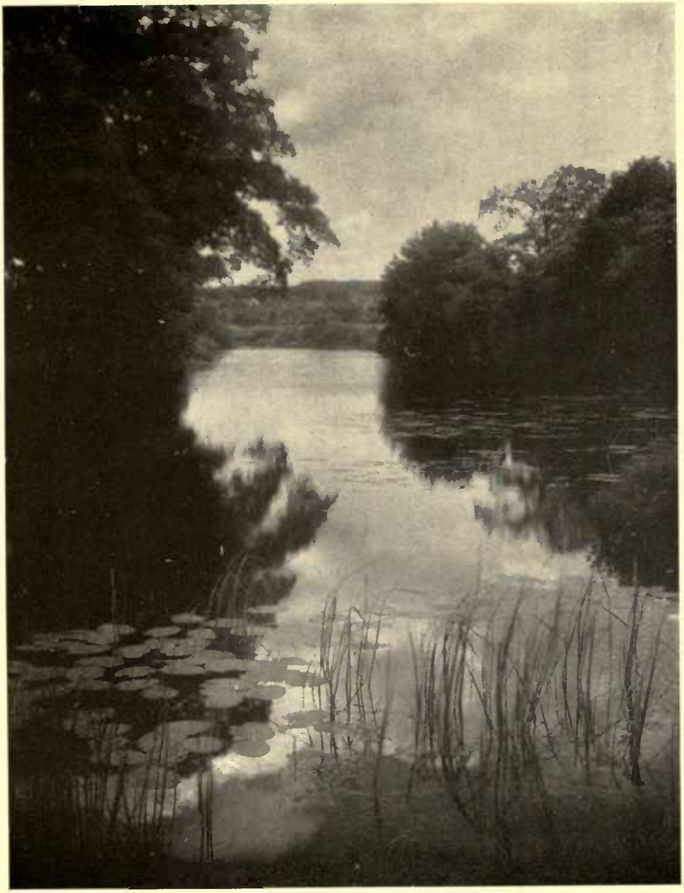
And as for recognising them by the attempts to reduce their songs to musical notes, or to syllables! The one perfected effort I now recall is Emerson's starling phrase,

"The starling flutes his *O-ka-lee*,"

as sweetly in the printed page as in the March marshes. And yet even this must be heard by that inner ear which remembers.

I do not like red—a red flower is like a coarse voice or an ungentle hand: it hurts; and in my garden I will have none of them. There is, however, a single exception, and that is a part of the pomp of September—the favoured Septembers in which one's good fortune shows us this special bit of splendid colouring. There is a scrap of verse somewhere about the cardinal flower, which shows it not ineffectively—verses which, I think, run somehow thus:

"Oh! Bumble-bee, revelling in the sweets
September has stowed away
In the heart of the wayside clover bloom,
Don't you know 'tis the Sabbath Day?



BROUGHTON'S POND

"Do you not know, you wicked Bee!
That the days of the week are seven:
Six long days for work and play,
The seventh for rest and Heaven?

"I know, but even on Sabbath days
A hungry Bee must dine,
And so I must work for my dinner sweet
Of honey and clover-wine.

"Beside, I have been to the forest church,
Where the great pine-trees form aisles,
And with their branches weave the roof
Through which the glad sun smiles.

"On pine-leaf organ the west wind played,
While birds, a tuneful throng,
With brook and insect and whispering reeds,
Carry the psalm along.

"The Cardinal Flower, in crimson dressed,
His hands in prayer did raise
And in his sermon did repeat
Our great Creator's praise.

"'What was his text?' The words that I
To the clover blooms sing low,
That the Summer winds to the rushes tell,
That I hear in the brooklets' flow:

"That the waves lisp murmuring to the shore
In a dreamy soft refrain;
That the snowflakes tell to the winter woods,
That the flowers learn from the rain.

"The same glad words that the calm stars sing
In the quiet skies above,
In one grand chorus, 'Life is sweet
And God is Eternal Love.'"

OCTOBER

The bright-eyed squirrels, furry, fleet,
A gleaming go on pattering feet.
Brown nuts, polished by early frost,
On the moss below by the winds are tossed.
Maple and hickory, ash and oak
Each has donned a gorgeous cloak.
Red haws gleam the hazels near
Dry grass waves in the uplands sere,
    The year's at rest in the mellow haze,
    That crowns with gold these royal days !

THE CHESTNUT TREE

OCTOBER

THE TRAVELLER'S MOON

"THE year's grown old," we cry with Perdita. It is not any the less worth while for that, even in our gardens, perhaps better, if we have acquired the habit of thought that permits a cheerful contemplation of

> "The last of life, for which the first is made,"

and

> "Hence, in a season of calm weather,
> Though inland far we be,
> Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
> Which brought us hither!"

A garden, you know, is traversed by paths suited to the Seven Ages of Man impartially, and from the high, sunny alley of roses of noon, the quiet vistas to be travelled later in the evening, and even the dusky groves where it seems to be always night, beckon, not always to unresponding heart.

The anxieties of seedtime are over; fear of drought or flood, or insect or mildew are past. The spendthrift summer is gone, but it is a poor story if we cannot find in the careful hoardings of the autumn a beauty which the prodigal June had not. A hedge of roses on St John's Eve is a glorious sight, but a handful of the pointed buds of the China roses, set about with the crimson and purple shoots which September has provided, is far more precious. They have the added grace of that pathos which envelops everything for which we plan, and hope, and which, coming at last, comes so late that Farewell treads close upon the heels of All hail.

Now that it is October in all the gardens that the sun shines in; the friendly sun, to whom, says Thoreau, "the earth is all equally cultivated, and a garden," we are inspired with new virtues, and make haste to gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. We watch the skies for signs of rain or frost. We are abroad both early and late, because we know that idleness now means that there will be no flowers for us next spring. There is a touch of chill in the air; a prescience of coming change in the delicate withdrawal of familiar objects behind the thin veil woven from the smoke of countless fires of fallen leaves. Tenderly, but with certainty, we are told that the time for rest is drawing near, and, as in the last dear moments that go before all partings, we linger among the yet familiar friends, seeing beauties unguessed in richer days; giving praise begrudged aforetime, and trying with futile pains to make up for past indifference or blindness by a too brief arduous love.

In sweetpea time, how little we cared for the nasturtium! We recognised their usefulness and good will. We bade them hide a fence, and it vanished behind a wall of green. We told them to cover an unsightly heap of waste, and it was done. We asked them to take charge of the window boxes, and they overflowed with obliging leaves and bloom; but a careless nod was as much as they got for their pains. But now! How glorious we find their play of colour, and the arch posturings ordered by their pliant stems. True coquettes, we cannot be sure to-day what forms or colours they will assume to-morrow, nor can we master their pretty secrets of movement, or their tricks with beads of dew and drops of rain. Did they frolic thus all the summer, or have they waited for cool nights for their madcap pranks?

In August we scorned the salvias. Now they find their place—if they are planted in our neighbour's garden, and the neighbour keep at that discreet distance which allows the planes of air to do their task of blending and softening. It is a shame to think so ill of the good-natured braggart who makes so fine and quick a growth, and who is so lavish with his spires of scarlet bloom. No doubt he comforts many a heart with his cheerful bravado, and as he is an adaptable creature, asking little and giving much, he has his own large uses, and it is as little as we can do to ask his pardon for our ungracious thoughts. Not everybody likes scarlet, that is all.

Zinnias are the best October flowers. There are now strains that rival the rose in the depth of their crimson and the form of their flower-heads. There are oranges and yellows, and ochres and dull whites, which are most satisfying—planted against a background of spirea prunifolias and Thunberg's barberry, which colour so early, and in tints so nearly the same. I had almost used a word commonly reserved for homespun stuffs or for certain paints, and had said that the zinnias were durable flowers. Let the word stand! In the garden they last for weeks, and if they be placed in a jar big enough to hold them loosely, and a drop or two of camphor be added to the fresh water every day, and the ends of the stems be clipped often —*ands* enough, to be sure!—a cluster of them will keep for a fortnight. Zinnias are rather coarse, it is true, and fastidious persons do not like to touch their stems. They would not be at all satisfactory as spring flowers, but now they are all one could wish.

In early October the African marigolds make a fine show. Their rank scent has the same tonic quality as the frost-presaging morning air, and their colour is magnificent—sulphur, orange and copper. The first touch of frost kills them, but it does not kill the cosmos which is the hardiest of all the composites, except the chrysanthemums. Trained to a wire netting, and kept in place by lacings of raffia, the cosmos makes an uncommonly pretty, feathery green background for summer flower-beds, and comes surprisingly into full blossom after the swallows have left, and when the blackbirds are making ready for flight.

Dahlias are for October, although they have been making themselves felt ever since September came in. They used to be found only in the out-of-the-way and rather humble places whither so many old time-ities (to use Frank Stockton's word), have fled during the reign of the red geranium,[1] but now it has come to its own in popular favour, and is in danger of becoming that unbearable thing, a fashionable flower. If the soil be not too rich; if the season be not too damp; if a little judicious staking and a great deal of judicious pruning be done, the dahlia will make a fine show of velvet heads. They try to make it look like a cactus nowadays—but why? Why try to make anything or anybody resemble anything but itself or himself? The world has outgrown grained woodwork, and imitation marble walls and chimney-pieces;

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[1] The story of the Red Geranium is thus told to Joseph Vance. "What's a Willer? It's a 'ouse with stables for a one-'orse shay, and a green'us, and a gardener, and some scarlet geeraniums. And what's geeraniums? Well—geeraniums' what they sells on the barrers."

THE BONFIRE

why should it encourage a masquerade of flowers?

Pansies are incomparably finer now than they have been since early May, and the sweet-scented purple violets are again in bloom. Tiny seedlings of ladies' delights are beginning to bloom, and young English daisies have decided that they cannot wait for their first spring to know how it feels to offer the guardian sun a little garland of their white and pink blossoms. It is yet possible to gather a handful of the cornflowers, and perhaps the mignonette may still have blossoms to give away.

There is an old-fashioned flower which I long to see restored to its old place in October gardens, and that is the white and purple gomphrena. It is one of the many flowers known as bachelor's button, and because of the stiff bractlets which protect the life organs of the plant it is often called a strawflower. The white heads have a nacre-like purity which I have not seen in any other blossoms, and the crimson-purple ones cover cheerful little bushes with very prettily graded balls. They were much esteemed in the good old days of genuine country parlours, where stiff bunches of these everlasting flowers, interspersed with the silken flakes of the honesty filled the painted vases on the high mantel shelves just above the row of miniatures or silhouettes of slim-necked grandmammas, and perruqued grandpapas. Patriotism strikes its roots deep in the soil whereon the strawflowers grow.

On walls and trellises the cobeas are beginning to be worth while, and the Madeira vine, which has woven such a thick curtain of leaves, is threaded over with sweet white stitches of bloom. The evergreen honeysuckle thinks well to offer a last garland, and at its feet the Hermosa roses smile undismayed in the eyes of the frost. There may be other roses, a few hybrids, and teas, but it is always the delicate silvery-pink Hermosa that seems the true October rose.

In every shrubbery I would plant as many Japanese anemones as I could find room for. So placed, the summer growth is unobtrusive, and the white showers of bloom which come on the breath of the autumn winds make them among the most invaluable of our hardy plants. There is always the charm of the unexpected in an anemone. One cannot be quite sure how many sepals it will have, or what disposition it will make of them. The thing one can be safe to look for is the great, golden constant heart.

The October stone is, rightly enough, the opal, its pearly lights and pale amethystine shadows are her late dawns, and her early, haunted dusks. Its blues are her skies, its greens her young springing wheat, and its reds and pinks and yellows are those of her ripened leaves. And since this is true, the October garden must have plenty of lawn and plenty of shrubbery, and a good background of trees. For once I will not beg for white pines, but will have red oaks and black oaks, and a hickory, and one or two purple ashes, and a distant row of maples. Rock maple for yellow, and soft maples for the reds that outblush the sun that now sets in so dense a bank of smoke that we can look into his eyes unharmed. Between the trees and the zinnia beds sumachs shall grow; the tall ones which colour orange and pink; the short ones whose crimson leaves are stained with purple and olive. Both of these fine natives carry stiff cones of claret-coloured fruit far into the winter, and both have tropical suggestions in their pinnate leaves. I do not know why a divided leaf always has this subconscious meaning, but it has.

Dogwoods, which were the glory of the May woods, are equally glorious now. Sassafras is a close second, and even a small planting should contain it, and under the sassafras there must be plenty of pennyroyal, which is to me a herb of matchless potency in the evoking of old and beloved memories. Of common garden shrubs I have already spoken, my especial favourites being the white snowberry, and the barberries. With these are still late asters, pale purple, like drifts of smoke, among the withering leaves, and a small-flowered white variety that grows in the unnoted way certain asters affect, as if fern seed were sown about them, yet which at the right moment, doff their cloaks of darkness, and stand forth in a robe of silver embroidered with seed pearls. For once I wish I knew the scientific name of this fairy princess, so great a favourite is she with me, and gladly would I herald her praises. For all her finery she is a very democratic princess, and strolls along dusty highways and ragged fences like any gypsy.

To men, in whose hearts the ancient land hunger of the Aryan aches unsatisfied by all the white paper ever bleached and pressed, the true October is not red, but brown, the colour of

> "The good gigantic smile of the brown earth;"

There can be nothing more subtle than the mellow tones of a freshly ploughed field, velvet black if we look across them sunward; brown and grey with silver lights and purple shadows if we face the pole star. Horses seem glad to turn the furrows, and the farmer, casting the seed into the loam, is performing the highest and most symbolic of all human labours. Fellow-worker, he, with the sun and the wind and the rain and the frost, marrying the potent germ of the bread that is to be, with the dark secret forces, for ever working together with the awful First Cause, to care for that which, in its turn, must go back to the elements again and again in endless cycles.

Elizabeth, who needs no other name to the guests who flock to her German garden, tells us how she longs to imitate her servants and to put her hands into the dirt itself. The change would be but a poor one to me if I had to barter the friendly, homely contact with the pleasant earth for the dignity to which so great a solace was denied. If I had a real garden, with real soil in it, nothing should keep me from going down on my knees and getting every one of my ten fingers as black as black could be. I would dig. I would plant. I would weed: oh, with what joy!

Before the latter rains come, and while the chrysanthemums are budding, is the time for garden-making. There is not the constant hindrance of showery weather which April brings, and instead of courting rheumatisms and influenzas by bending over soaked borders, across which chilly winds are blowing, here is the golden haze of the ripened year to envelop us like a garment; comforting, strengthening. Leisure is abroad, a wide sense of duty accomplished inspires to new effort, and

> "Hope smiles enchanted, and waves her golden hair."

Already there must have been long hours of careful planning: already the changes which unmake the mistakes of the past have been decided upon. Already the bulb catalogues and the tree and shrub books, and the hardy plantsmen's lists have been committed to memory, and the processes of selection, revision, addition and elimination have been gone through time and again. Already the orders have been placed, and the express has brought those boxes and parcels whose opening means pure joy. The polished brown tulips; the fat, glossy daffodils; the rough-coated hyacinths; the slender Spanish iris; the little crocus buttons which set one guessing as in the old game of head-or-tails—the twiggy shrublets and the rough-looking perennials—ah! what equals these sights for suggestion, and for the fair, unseen beauty that hovers over them before the trained vision? Here is a true Shekinah, since wherever is beauty there is God.

The old borders must now be carefully spaded. If old clumps are to be divided, or transplanted, take them up tenderly, lift them with care, and, behold, one is many! Phlox roots are shifted, primroses are cleft and replanted, doubling and trebling the row that so rejoiced all eyes last spring. New violet beds are to be started from the strong seedlings that grow in between the old plants. New pansies must be taken from the cold frame and set out between the fresh plantings of daffodils. The Madonna lilies which were reset in August now show fine tufts of root leaves between which young plants of English larkspur show their cleft leaves. Rows of Canterbury bells, mats of pinks and sweet williams and columbines—where is the time to come from in which to get everything in order? What will happen if we have failed to hoard every flake of ashes from the hearth fire? What shall we do if we have forgotten to bring home from every outing a pailful of sand for lightening the soil, or for sifting under and over every Dutch bulb? Which is better worth while, a new coat or some loads of earth from the depths of a swamp; from the woods or from the stableyard of some farmer too careless to know that he would do better to give away his best cow than the rich composts to which he is so indifferent? There is a constant opportunity for choice on garden days, and a better school for developing the ideal and for learning to rate lower things at their true value can nowhere else be found.

I think I once said that in all my life I had never read a page from a printed book out of doors. Nor ever will! Books are for winter—for nights, for stormy days, and for times of ailing health. Why spend time in reading, when we might be seeing? And are not our eyes to be trusted as well as another's?

There is no prohibition, however, against thinking in the open that which has been learned by the study fire, and he walks through a garden but poorly fitted for its best enjoyment who has not the companionship of the thoughts other men have had there. The eyes of Richard Jeffries, of Thoreau, of Burroughs and of Bradford Torrey; of Izaak Walton, of Dean Hole, and Canon Ellacombe, of Maeterlinck, and of White of Selborne—to name a few favourite out-of-door observers who write what is called prose, but which is often the highest poetry—open our own to a thousand things unnoted before. There are some precious books by women—Mrs C. W.

Earle, Mrs Alice Morse Earle, Miss Jeykll, Mrs Clarke, Miss Blachjen, Mrs Thaxter, Mrs Wright and the charming Elizabeth, which seem, indeed, to make it idle for another woman to write down the garden thoughts that grow in the shadowy White-paper Country where her possessions lie. More precious still are the old herbals and travellers' journals and early handbooks, and best of all are the worn old poetry books, with dried violets between their leaves, and pencil marks and dates along their margins, from which we have learned the singing words that lighten our garden days. I could not have the best of October if I could not repeat Keats' "Ode to Autumn" as I walk through the golden afternoons, and over and over I repeat these perfect lines of Emily Dickinson:

"These are the days when birds come back,
A very few: a bird or two
To take a backward look.

"These are the days when skies put on
The old, old sophistries of June—
A blue-and-gold mistake.

"O fraud that cannot cheat the bee!
Almost thy plausibility
Induces my belief.

"Till ranks of seeds their witness bear,
And softly through the altered air
Hurries a timid leaf.

"O sacrament of summer days,
O lost communion of the haze,
Permit a child to join.

"Thy sacred emblems to partake
Thy consecrated bread to break,
Taste thy immortal wine!"

I have not been quite able to guess out Miss Dickinson's favourite flower, and so to win one more point in a little game of *solitaire*, at which I sometimes play on rainy nights, when I like to think of the flowers my forerunners have found to be worthy of their best love. I am almost sure, however, that it must have been the Indian pipe—that illusive yet most alluring mystery of the deep woods, which beckons you with a promise of spiritual unfoldings which our minds are, alas! too gross to perceive!

Of English writers, the daisy is for Chaucer. We have no other view of the poet of the dawn so intimate as that in which we see him in eager flight across the dewy grass of that long-ago morning when the virgin daisies were opening their golden hearts to the sun.

Wherever he could plant a daisy in the fair gardens of his verse there shine these

> "Pearled Arcturii of the Earth,
> The constellated flower that never sets."

Daisies were dear to Shelley and to Keats as well as to Burns, to Goethe also (English, by right of translation), but I cannot but think that he cared more for the more sophisticated myrtles and laurels!

For Spenser, who loved all loveliness, I cannot find any distinctive favourite: that a flower was fair to look at and sweet to breathe was enough for him. Shakespeare wove many garlands of English blossoms, but most of all he loved the cowslips of the Avonside fields. The footsteps of Johnson's "Gentle Shepherdess" were blotted out by the field-flowers that sprang up wherever her light steps passed; and the best gifts which Sir Walter Raleigh's shepherd could offer to his dear, came from the hedgerow.

In Milton's "Lycidas" he gives one perfect characterisation:

> "The pansy freaked with jet."

Otherwise his botany is that of one of those rather unobservant townsmen who would never have found a four-leaved clover, lived they ever so long. And that, by the way, is my test of a careful and accurate observer—the finding of these luck-leaves, which are really not at all uncommon.

Herrick loved all flowers equally—apple blossoms, tulips, carnations, primroses gilly flowers. To him they were smiling and innocent maidens, whose charms the free-spoken old divine was never tired of praising.

We think of Addison and the London of his brilliant day together, but for all that he knew of the manners of the great world he knew this also: "There is not a bush in bloom within a mile of me, which I am not acquainted with, nor scarce a daffodil or violet that withers in my neighbourhood without my missing it. I walk home in this temper of mind through several fields and meadows with an unspeakable pleasure, not without reflecting on the bounty of Providence which has made the most pleasing and the most beautiful objects the most common," and "I value my garden more for being full of blackbirds than of cherries and very frankly give them fruit for their songs."

Wordsworth, we know, kept such trysts with plants, and in our own land Hawthorne knew when to go to the haunts of bogarethums almost as surely as Emerson's feet were led to the rhodoras. Thoreau knew by high instinct as well as by long experience when and where to find every growing thing in that wonderful little world about Concord in which, he tell us, "I have travelled a great deal," and of which he has made citizens every one who loved his mistress Nature.

Keats and Shelley and Wordsworth had each a golden word for every flower they knew. The daisy belonged to them and to Burns, as I have said; and to Sir Walter the bracken, the harebell and the heather were a part of the caller air of Scotland. Miss Austen had a quiet liking for the trim Georgian gardens, walled in and sweet with roses and lavender but she, as well as her sprightly sister, Miss Ferriers, were too busy with men and women to care overmuch about things inanimate, a trait showed by Miss Brontë and George Eliot, in a degree. So was Thackeray, who had small patience with the "faded vegetable" once a rose and so always a rose to poor Maria Esmond, and aside from an occasional bouquet from Covent Garden Market no flowers to speak of grow on his pages. Dickens will always be associated with the ivy and holly of his favourite season.

Edward Fitzgerald was passionately fond of nasturtiums. Ruskin loved lilies, and great Florentine iris, and vine leaves, but indeed his was a taste so catholic as to include the little brunella, which he called a "brownie flower." Hunted from lawns, crowded away into waste places, and forced to find foothold by dusty waysides and foul ditches it is curious that this little self-heal should have been praised by men so different, temperamentally, as Ruskin, Thoreau, and Emerson. Like Thoreau, Tennyson loved blue flowers. The Brownings, the Rossettis, Swinburne, Morris, Austen were all garden lovers. Longfellow and Whittier were loyal to the New England flora, and Lowell was at his best when he wrote of the dandelion. Bryant was the gentian's friend, and Hawthorne that of the arethusa, as might have been expected of his solitary and reserved nature. Dr Holmes chanted the praise of box, and next after this cared for the little grape hyacinths or "blue bottles" that lurk about in gardens made in colonial days. A book might easily be written about the flower-loves that have cheered men devoted to letters, to music and to painting, and almost without exception it would be found that they centred about

> "the good old week-day blossoms
> I used to see so long ago
> With hearty sweetness in their bosoms
> Ready and glad to bud and blow."

By the time October is well on her way, the most stupid person will have learned at least one garden lesson, and that is that Nature loves to plant in masses, and with an eye to the effect of the flower upon the landscape.

By landscape we may mean—we always do when we can—the wide sweep of hills and valleys, or rolling fields and orchards which lose themselves in a far horizon, or we may mean the sheltered spacelet which lies between a tiny cottage and its neighbour. If Nature has a spray of ladies' tresses she sets it where its beauty is supreme—at the edge of a ferny hollow. If she has a spire or two of cardinal flowers, she gives it into the care of a grey-bouldered brook, which nourishes some special mosses and tall sedges to give it companionship, or coaxes a hemlock-tree to spread its drooping boughs near by. To find one of these jewels in its appointed setting is always an event of moment, and introduces one to a most beautiful planting secret. For everyday work, however, she trusts to the effect invariably produced by the flowering together of many plants of the same species, the whites of a daisied hillside ; the purple-rose of a heathery moor, the yellows of a marshland of goldenrods and tiny sunflowers. These are the open pages on which can be read at a glance what she wishes us to do if we are willing to work with her. So planted one flower protects another, thus winning the cross fertilisation essential to the transmission of many species, and so arranged there is always possible the full gratification of colour-sense which no solitary flower can ever give.

The second lesson is that of succession. What is the good if your garden is aglow at opentyde with all the tulips that ever came out of the East with the sunlight in their veins, if there be no answering loveliness of midsummer lilies, or late autumn asters? A pause of even a week between the flowerings of your garden-beds means that you have been faithless to the highest teachings, and careless of their offered bounty.

Perceiving these truths, living them and showing them to others, the garden may become a little centre of civilising influences from which peace, and order, and contentment irradiate—who can say how far?

NOVEMBER

Over the night's low clouds, the flare
Of burning marsh throws a ruddy glare.
Blue mists cling to the distant hill;
The flowers are gone, and the woods are still
Where dry grass bends neath the fox's tread
The weird witch-hazel's bower is spread.
Across the sunset sky, the crows
Cawing fly, in wavering rows:
    Slowly and sadly the daylight dies
    The wind is bleak, it sobs and cries!

LATE AFTERNOON

NOVEMBER

THE BEAVER'S MOON

"THERE are as many kinds of gardens as there are of poetry," says *The Tatler*, and among them all there can never be one that is commonplace.

The very word garden implies much—space set apart with a definite purpose of adding to the world's stock of beauty; labour, time and money consecrated to the same high intent; learning, experience and the long, long thought of the faithful men who have devoted themselves to the calling of

"The grand old gardener"

to whom the first garden was given to dress. One may look at the story of Adam from many points of view, but the garden background is always insistently present.

When all the gardeners win home to Paradise at last what a gathering it will be! From what most ancient Indias and Chinas and Persias and Egypts will they come! From what Spains, and Low Countries! What Italys and what Englands! How will kings be abased before the patient husbandmen who added a new grain to man's store of food; and how will the greatest soldiers be forgotten in the presence of the unpraised courage of travellers who have brought garden tribute from farthermost isles to our shores! How will the wealth that ordered vast pleasaunces pale before the love that kept a geranium alive in the basement of a city's slum; or the blended thoughts that sanctify the bit of flower-bed in front of the hut of an Iceland fisherman! How we shall rejoice to see the old herbalists, whose books are such mines of delight, and how we shall honour the monks and nuns who kept the gentle art alive through warring ages!

Now that the nights are long again I begin to feel anew how great is my debt to the writers of the "books on gardening" which are so many that in any well-ordered library they require a department all to themselves. There has never yet been one that was wholly stupid, nor will there be, since how can a book be wholly dull whose pages are set with the words which must be set there over and over—lily, rose, shadow, sunlight, April, September! It makes me have but scanty patience until my book too is admitted to the outermost fringes of so delightful a companionship, and I set forth my white-paper thoughts all the more confidently and gladly because between them lie so much that I have inherited from their store.

In the twilight the Pleiades are shining, and the great suns of Orion are rising, so that I know November is here. I make haste to blot out all that I said of the other months, save April only, and declare that this is the year's high holiday. Its colours alone will I wear, as I set forth to do battle in its praise. "November hath an evil name in sooth!" cries one, "and as for its garden—it hath no garden." The more need of a champion, dear and true!—since thou art so belied!

When we look back to May we remember the haste we made to be glad because of the perfecting of young leaves. Why is there not an equal rejoicing in the first days of the bare boughs? We realise with a shock of remembrance how infinitely beautiful they are, and how again all things are become new, now that the ripened leaves have fallen, and the trees stand forth against the sunset in all their simple dignity and strength.

"There it stands," said the Autocrat, "leafing out hopefully in April as if it were trying in its dumb language to lisp 'Our Father,' and dropping its slender burden of foliage in October as softly as if it were whispering 'Amen!'" The temptation to quote men's tributes to trees is very strong. They are God's kindly thoughts written in green for summer to spell out, and drawn in brown and grey lines for easy reading lessons against the snows. November trees are neither, taken as a whole, for while most of the deciduous brotherhood have accepted the warnings of the frost, the oaks are in their glory, enriching the garments of the ripened year with a stiff embroidery of splendid colouring, as the vestments of some great ecclesiastic are heavy with bullion-work and pearls.

These are the days of the frank avowal of the secrets of the nests of birds. Who knew that on the tip of the maple bough hung the cuplike nest of the vireo? Who guessed that high in the elm the oriole had hung his tossing cradle? A walk across the lawn will convince one that he is not its only tenant, nor has he the fairest lodging or the nimblest air.

It is in the early November that we recover our joy in the forgotten beauty of the evergreens. When beechen leaves were unfolding we did not notice how the pines were pushing out whorls of delicate needles; and when we were absorbed in the waving of green birch boughs we did not mark the firs or the hemlocks. Now they are old friends, welcomed back, and richer for the experience of another summer.

There is no need to care if the garden is hidden by the fallen maple leaves, for the day of the red oaks is not here until All Saints' Summer has come. Then what compares with the soft reds and crimsons and purples and browns, softened and mellowed by the ineffable haze of Indian summer? Seen across a marsh, all brown with wasted grasses, or grey with plumes of seeded goldenrod, and below a sky, soft, distant, pale, there is no vista more to be desired as closing out the world at the orchard's end.

"One thousand of delytes are in an orchard, and sooner shall I be weary than I can reckon the last part of that pleasure which one that hath and loves an orchard may find therein," wrote William Lawson three hundred years ago. And he would have men follow the custom which yet obtains in the Tyrol, and order all newly married pairs to plant trees. A very paradise his orchard must have been, for he would have in it beside apples and cherries, medlars and apricots, bees, "cleanly and innocent bees," and he would have birds and running water—"And in mine opinion I could highly recommend your Orchard if thorow it or hard by it should runne a pleasant River with silver stremes. . . . And one chief grace that adorns an Orchard I cannot let slip, a broode of nightingales, who, with their several notes and themes, with a strong delightsome voyse out of a weak body will bear you company night and day."

I think Izaak Walton would have loved this garden, and Sir Thomas Overbury and Sir Thomas Browne, who were I am sure good gardeners, as all good men would be if Fates were kind.

The "broode" of nightingales would doubtless be silent when November came, even in nightingale land, but for us, who can say

> "I am at one with all the kinsman things
> That e'er my Father fathered,"

it is no bad exchange to see the blue jays flitting among the moss-grown boughs, or to see a small owl fare forth into the silent dusk. An owl belongs to an orchard. I can think of them as being nowhere else. Perhaps that is because there were owls complaining to the moon that shone through the orchard trees at grandfather's, and because to that lost Eden my homesick thoughts so often fly.

> "Was it always Spring in the long-ago,
> At grandfather's?
> Was the orchard hid always in rosy snow;
> In its shades did the violets always grow,
> While blackbirds paced, with crests aglow
> Under the pines where softest winds
> Rocked the cradle of baby bird,
> To tunes the sweetest ever heard?
> Tunes that come to my longing ears,
> Over the silence of many years,
> From grandfather's!

"Was it always Summer, there, of old,
At grandfather's?
Were wheatfields always a sea of gold?
Were meadows but carpets gay, unrolled
For the frolic winds to toss and fold?
'Mid oat-sheaves ripe, did shy quails pipe
While shadow and sunshine went and came,
With a glory that never was twice the same?
On grateful leaves were the warm rains wept
While over the prairie the dim dusk crept
To grandfather's?

"Was it always Autumn in those fair days
At grandfather's?
Were the woods for ever a golden blaze
Of light, half-hidden by amber haze,
Through which we walked enchanted ways,
Over grasses green, over glistening sheen
Of fallen leaves, where the cup-moss grew,
And the crisp rime lay in the place of dew?
Were there always scents as of ripened stores
Of corns and fruits, from the granery doors
At grandfather's?

"Was it always Winter—cold and white
At grandfather's?
Did suns set always in crimson light,
And stars come, silent, far and bright
To make more fair the cloudless night?
Where pine-trees bold fenced out the cold
Was there ever a light like the light that glowed
From the ruddy pane down the snowy road,
Where the warm fire touched the welcoming face,
That gave to winter its tenderest grace
At grandfather's?

"Are those days all past, or all before
Us, Grandfather?
Where you are now—on that blessed shore—
Do they wait with you, those days of yore—
In the Land where change comes never more?
Shall we find them stored, that precious hoard!
Summers and winters, falls and springs,
Snowfalls and harvests and blossomings—
Babyhood, childhood, budding youth,
Innocence, happiness—love and truth,
And *you*, Grandfather?"

I seem to have come to the farthermost metes and bounds of the garden since I have planted a red-oak forest beyond a stretch of marshland, and a deep-bosomed orchard, and not a word have I said of my flowers. And even now I can come no farther than the hedge, since I must have a hedge of the native thorns which were white in May and now are red with the small sour haws beloved by boys and birds. Over certain haws the feathery clematis must toss her grey seed clusters, and over others the bittersweet must twist his tight cordage covered with brilliant berries. Some wahoos must grow in the corner, because of their gay three-cornered hats, and there must be some barberries threaded over with jewels. On one side of the place tall privets must shut out winds that freeze and thaw; arches may be cut in these, to give views across the orchard, and to admit more clearly the singing of the orchard brook. Another opening, carefully led up to by a path, parts the thorns to show the rounded purple woodland beyond the fields.

Now is the solitary reign of the chrysanthemum, the golden flower which art has coaxed into wearing many colours beside the name one. It is the glory of the mighty race of the composites, and it seems as if man and nature had conspired to make the year's last flower the crown of all flowerings. I do not care for the great overgrown, florist's chrysanthemum, those fringed and curled darlings of the urban heart. In my garden I would not even plant those half-tender varieties which in some long-deferred Indian summer perfect themselves in the open brook. Plants, as well as men, are noble only in proportion to their trustworthiness, and good intentions not rounded into fulfilment are as fatal in the vegetable kingdom as elsewhere.

The praises of the chrysanthemums that I love are not sounded in floral catalogues, nor have the flowers themselves ever thought

THE FOREST POND

of showing their faces among the ruffling gentry of a show. Crêped, cupped, quilled, curled, frosted, inverted, reverted — I had almost said perverted—the florists have done their best—or their worst—for the chrysanthemum of Commerce, but there is, happily, another type, which belongs to older, simpler days, untouched by the modern spirits of greed and ostentation, and sweet with a tender idealism. These are the true golden flowers.

Under sunward eaves of grey farmhouses, along the grape arbours of village yards, close to boundary fences, and in country burying gounds, everywhere where a certain unworldly kind of women yet linger, the hardy old friends still thrive. All summer their grey leaves have grown unnoticed among the poppies and cornflowers, and suddenly, after the marigolds have been touched by the first light frost, the little bushes announce an uncounted store of tight little buds which grow and grow through the long, still, hazy days, as if they and the frost were running a race for some unseen goal. How we used to lean over the borders and watch them! Was the mercury falling?

Were there clouds in the evening sky, or was there that frost-presaging clarity of the atmosphere through which Aldebaran seemed but a light on a watch-tower and Vega, far westering, a sapphire which an earthly king might almost seize and wear? Shall we stretch a length of cheese cloth on some light poles to protect our loved ones? The friend who gave me that yellow flower tipped with bronze used always to pin newspapers over hers on threatening nights, and many a time, in old village gardens, I have seen enswarthements of blue gingham aprons about the bushes, which would, I know, far gladlier have died in a valiant hand-to-hand encounter with the advancing foe than to have their lives prolonged by such humiliating means. It is an involuntary tribute to its value that so many pains are taken to prolong the day of the flower.

In almost every year there comes a day, well on in November, when the garden is again the haunt of perfect loveliness. From many other gardens where the loose-petalled beauties have dwelt from time out of mind, the feast has been gathered. There are yellow flowers, great, soft yellows, of the colour no other flower ensnares, and a bitter pungency all its own. There are pinks, soft, dull pinks, with white or grey in their high lights and copper-red in their shadows. There are browns which are orange also, when we come to the last analysis, and whites which are greys, and greens, and yellows as well. Ah, what colour! what fragrance! And what abundance! Not a stalk can be found which would think of offering a single niggardly flower. Threes, sixes, or even tens, that is their idea of a proper stalk. It is true that they have a trick of lolling, face downward, on the grass, which is annoying when we feel that the loss of even a single blossom from the garden picture is an appreciable one. It is not hard to train them against some simple lattice, or to unpainted stakes so slight that they need not suggest a lumber yard. They do best laced back to a hedge or a shrubbery, but they also grow excellently close to the foundations of a house, and they are inconceivably lovely when they overhang a bank, or tumble like a fountain of coloured fire down a little hill slope. The main point is to have enough of them; to plant them in masses, and in places where the sun,

"the gardener of the world,"

can visit them all day long.

If I complain of the languid airs of these larger flowered varieties, no fault can be found with the pompons. Strong, soldierly fellows, in gayest uniform, with every button polished, and every buckle bright, they march through the breach made by the falling of their summer comrades, and literally keep their colours flying, and the bright music of their cheers ringing until they are overborne at the last, and die the death of heroes. There is no flower so courageous except the snowdrop.

As the chrysanthemums open, and we realise that they are the last flower we can hope to gather, unless it be a handful of Christmas roses, we begin to plan how best to prolong their life after cutting. One way is to clip off the long stems of buds, plunge them in deep, wide-mouthed jars filled with water, and placed in a cool, well-lighted room. Here the flowers will perfect themselves a week or ten days after those left uncut in the garden, and from this store vases can be arranged at leisure.

The Japanese have an elaborate system of flower arrangement; one so complicated indeed, and so far-reaching in its relation to the life and religion, the history and the poetry of the people, that a course of study in the art covers at least two years. Volumes have been written to explain the theories and to illustrate the rules which govern the disposition of cut flowers, which rules are, after all, only a comprehension and application of what is everywhere an open secret. The Japanese have made so close a study of Nature that they have necessarily come into especially intimate relations with her, and a certain grace and poetry which is evident in everything they touch has taught them to use common things in uncommon ways, and so makes them the teachers of our less sensitive selves.

In a very true sense, according to the interpreters of Dai Nippon, a flower suffers loss and even degradation by being cut at all, and is much better seen in the open. Hence the high holidays of the cherry-viewing, and the feasts in honour of the iris, the scarlet maple, and other queens-regnant of summer. Since habit has given leave to cut them, and certain domestic occasions seem to demand their assistance, it is permitted to use them only under conditions best suited to them, and hence the elaborate ceremonial attending the placing of a single flower.

To the sick it is permitted to send a blossom having strong growth, preferably one having a woody stem, such being symbolic of health; of longevity.

Flowers to be used on occasions of farewell must be chosen from those bearing blossoms oftener than once a year, thus implying a speedy reunion.

A costly flower, or one whose possession necessarily indicates wealth, is not desired. A blossom is a thing too sacred to be associated with money, or ostentation, nor may "the foot of pride come near it."

Only seasonable flowers may be used: those forced at great labour or cost are, in spite of their loveliness, touched by vulgarity, and anything like the use of flowers in masses is distinctly to be avoided.

If a flower is particularly choice, no other may be displayed in the same apartment. Only inferior sorts may be used together, and there is never even a suggestion of what is occidentally known as a bouquet. All of the refinement and fastidiousness of the orient would shrink from the display of our western dinner or ball, our church festivals, and still more, from our funerals.

The stem is considered to be of equal decorative value with the flower. Is it not curved and tinted and branched, and set with buds or thorns or tendrils, with a care equal to that given to the blossom? And does not Nature know best what foliage is suited to it? Therefore let none but its own be placed near the flower, unless one is chosen for the frank reason of contrast.

The blossoms of a hardy or woody stemmed plant are never to be associated with those of a tender or succulent stemmed variety.

Flowers of hill and valley may never be combined, nor may a water plant and a shore plant be brought together.

Under no circumstances may exotic and native flowers be used together.

Colours and textures must be thoughtfully studied.

The vase or jug in which the flower is to be displayed is to be carefully chosen with relation to the position, and space it is to occupy, and the blossom is to hold. There can never be an excuse for the use of a vessel of choice porcelain or glass. Such things are works of art, and must never be degraded from their own high mission. Besides, to use would be to endanger such possession, and it is desecration to ruin the work of an artist. Coarse pottery, good in shape and colour, may under certain conditions bear some simple suggestions in line by way of decoration, but plain surfaces are in better taste. Vases of clear, heavy glass are desirable as giving the beholder the added pleasures afforded by stems and water. This glass must be extremely plain in design. Metal holders are to be used for boughs, never for delicate flowers.

The surface of the water in the receptacle is imagined to be the soil from which the flower is growing, and nothing but the close observation of the living plant will give the student a sympathetic understanding of the direction and height to be given the cut flowers. Nothing may be left to chance, and so many devices have been thought out by which exact position

THE PETERSHAM WOODS

can be obtained and kept. Coils of lead cut into spirals and dropped into the jar give it weight, and offer many interstices for the stems. Little lattices, curved or in squares, are made of bamboo splints, sunken just below the water line, then drawn up to it, and held in place, while the swelling caused by the water wedges them safely into place. This treatment would be unsafe for anything but thick pottery or glass. Pieces of wood, bored with holes of irregular sizes, are wedged into the jars by the same means. A device of Miss Jeykll's has given us the same solidity and support, with no danger or trouble, she having invented a thick disc of very heavy glass, pierced with holes, into which the stems may be readily inserted. A piece of wire netting is often laid over the top of a broad bowl, and for temporary use, and very small flowers, a circle of pasteboard pierced by a stiletto holds its frail burden prettily.

Plants with pendulous blossoms must be hung, or placed on a shelf from which they look down upon the beholders. Small and delicate flowers must be placed on low tables or stools, so that they can be gazed at from above. If the room contain a particularly fine painting or hanging, the principal lines of the flower-arrangement must point toward it.

The height of the cut bough must exceed that of the holder, one and one-half times if a tall jar and long branches are to be used. For a low bowl, the bough bearing the blossom chosen must exceed the width of the holder one and one-half times. No more flowers may ever be used than can be displayed as individuals, although it is of course permissible and even desirable that one or more be placed in perspective to suggest mystery, distance, reserve.

See how much poetry as well as how much sound sense lies in this brief summary of the easiest of those golden rules that have been thought out so patiently and so long ago! Blessings without number are promised those who practise them, and why not? Economy, humility, patience, reverence—these are the virtues they teach. Taste, grace, ideality of form, appreciation of colour, knowledge of the habits and habitats of plants, delicacy of perception—these are the pleasant fruits of the study.

I like to keep my own flower holders on a shelf of their own, and am always on the lookout for recruits, although these are chosen slowly, as I choose my friends. There is an ancient bowl of Russian copper-work which has nothing to do until nasturtiuns are in bloom, and then it overflows with them until the last one falls before the frost. There is a tall brass jug for Queen Anne's lace, and for wild asters. Winter boughs of red or black berries go into it, and it has seen daffodils. A tall Chinese cylinder of dull pink and green holds sometimes white chrysanthemums, and sometimes some wild grasses, and the dark pods of the false indigo ; and a turquoise-blue ginger jar overlaid with coarse bamboowork comes down when the poets' narcissus calls for it, and again when China asters are gay in September. Roses and daffodils glow and burn in tall glass vases, and I miss no glimpse of their stems or stalks, and a coarse Mexican pitcher in dull orange lives only to hold marigolds. There is a little blue-and-grey Flemish mug which never held anything but the pink polyanthus of April, and a tall, flaring vase of Allerdale ware in soft green which is sacred to violets. Tall glasses which come from that haven of thrifty poverty, the ten-cent store; a Grueby bowl, a Dedham plate for the flat bouquets I love to arrange in hollyhock time, all these stand on the shelf. None of them have any special value, but all are good work-a-day friends, giving me service when I ask it, and keeping fresh and fair the remembrance of the blossoms they have held, long after the blossoms themselves are gone, in a way no vase could possibly do were it used indiscriminately for whatever flower might chance to be mine.

After all, our gardens mean more or less to us as we have more or fewer associations connected with them and their fair denizens. I have long held a most unorthodox pity in my heart for Adam and Eve, since in Eden there was no chance for him to ask, "Do you remember?" or for her to question, "Have you forgotten?" Roses were only roses to them, not links with that which had been. Violets and lilies were nothing but lilies and violets, not personalities who had known love and death, and so not a part of their innermost selves. The walks were not haunted by beloved wraiths, and the shaded glades held no memories, sweet or bitter. What if our own gardens were effaced each year by the snows, and bore each spring new flowers? What if there were no daffodils, no lilacs, but only gorgeous scented strangers? No one, I take it, would then care to plant even a White-paper Garden!

DECEMBER

With whisper and rustle, and start and hush,
The dry leaves murmur in tree and bush.
On sombre pines, with boughs bent low,
Forsaken nests are piled with snow.
The chick-a-dees, alert for seeds,
Chatter and cling to the swaying weeds.
The snow drifts deep in the country ways ;
And short and cold are the dreary days.
Yet fair on the brow of the frozen night
The Christmas Star gleams large and bright !

A FROSTY MORNING

DECEMBER

THE HUNTER'S MOON

IT is the Shortest Day. It is Sunday also. Even in the farthermost solitudes the day announces itself by the strange harmony into which the light blends all that is of earth with all that is not. The whole world takes on a softer aspect, as if it knew that some gracious and beautiful gift were being given to all created things. The sky takes on a more benignant aspect than on other days, the wind speaks with a gentler voice, and has a gentler touch. Fields stretch away to far blue hills as if a deeper peace lay upon them, and the trees stand in more solemn patience, as they submit to the Over Fate which has taken away their leaves and bidden them make ready for storm-time.

On the grey boughs empty nests are swinging. The last thistle-plume eddies through the hollow at the will of a vagrant wind, in whose spiral dance wise eyes can read a change of weather. The last red leaf drifts helplessly hedgeward and is lost in the briary tangle already full of those lightly blown grasses known to country folk as "Limber Well." Everywhere there is snow. The lightest-footed bird has left the imprint of his presence upon it; the slenderest bent-grass has cut its shadow there with a line so fine and clear that no modern painter could ever hope to reproduce it, and which leads us back to the days when the missal painters sat humbly at the feet of the Teacher of the grasses! Under drifts blue caves allure the fancy. Evergreens are heavy with the same white burden of transfiguring purity that curves the furrows in the field into a resemblance too poignant to be ignored.

> "Once for each Son the kind Earth-Mother grieves:
> For each, one soft sigh shudders through her breast
> Once for each one: and every low sigh leaves
> Another grave wherein is perfect rest."

The year's work is over at last. There is nothing to do, even in a White-paper Garden. Through the long day we have toiled, and now the night is coming, when Mother Nature will gather us into her arms and croon a bedtime song. Softly, gently, almost imperceptibly she has already gathered the greater number of her children in, and has tucked them away under the white blanket. She has given each one a dream for company, and now she is waiting to hear what I have done in my garden days with my one poor little talent, before I, too, get the kiss and the dream and go to sleep.

To begin with the Omissions.

I have not said a word about a water garden, and yet I have known all along that nothing is more satisfactory than even a little pool in which the birds may bathe and drink, and wherein the blue sky, looking down between the leaves, may peep at the reflection there half hidden by the lilies. As perfume is the soul of the flower, so water is the soul of the landscape, and its presence in the garden is an unalloyed delight. A cemented pool need not overtax a very modest purse, and there are so many lovely water lilies and lotus and bamboos ready to grow in it, and so many obliging minnows and goldfish ready to keep it sweet, that it seems a pity that instead of providing one, now that the eleventh hour is long past, I am not now describing the twelfth of a series. The chief precaution to be taken, if stones or mortars be resorted to, is that there be no regular shape to it and no sharply defined outline. There are ferns enough, and iris enough, and grasses and trailing things enough, to make the garden and the pool themselves unconscious where one ends and the other begins. Here, as everywhere, the absolute necessity of a background of shrubs presents itself, and perhaps near here, if ever, a formal seat may be admitted. I like the garden furniture which can be easily moved about, wicker chairs and tables, camp-stools, and so on, and have never yet found pleasure in the ordinary garden seat, which has usually a bit of bare ground in front of it, a most uncompromising back, and a very unfortunate habit of being in the sun just when shade would be particularly agreeable.

I have not said a word about the way in which the house should be made one with the garden. Houses we must have, whether we like them or not, and although they often take up space which it would be very agreeable to devote to other uses, and since they are here, it is a matter of first importance to make them agree with the more important part of the place as best we can. A house needs the refining and softening effect of creepers and trailers almost as much as it needs a roof, and there are happily so many to choose from that no wall need be left to the barren ugliness of plain brick or boards. For stone walls the English ivy is by far the best cover, and there is a climbing euonymus which is also evergreen. The Japanese ampelopsis is the third perfect adornment for brick or stone. It is useless to try to grow it against wood, for which the native grape, the Virginia creeper, Hall's honeysuckle and wisterias are admirably adapted. There is a papilionaceous trailer or climber, the kudzu vine, which makes the most surprising growth, and is entirely satisfactory. The Dutchman's pipe is good, and better far is the native bittersweet, which has the cleanest possible habits. There is a wild solanum which will cover a lattice with its pretty purple flowers, and its clusters of brilliant red berries, but it must not be used if there are children about, who might be tempted to eat the glowing fruit. Cobeas, Madeira vines, moonflowers, and all the beautiful ipomeas and clematis, with such roses and jessamine as endure the cold, aided by a few lengths of the wire netting whose invention was such a benefaction to the world, these are all so easy to get, and so easy to grow that it ought to be as impossible to find a house without its covering of vines, as a child barefoot in the winter snow.

The walls being taken care of, the angle formed by the foundation stone and the lawns must be blotted out by shrubs and small trees. The taller ones are to be placed in the corner, and against such portions of the wall as are windowless, the lesser to stand under the windows. The list to choose from is exactly as long as the plantsman's announcements of the wares he has for sale. In semi-rural communities there are often good bushes to be had for the asking, and these are usually much larger than can be bought, but if one must buy, field-grown roots at least two years, old should always be chosen.

For the northern exposures, laurel and rhododendron should be planted in an irregular bed, well spaded and well fertilised. A few low junipers may be grouped with these, and between the corner of the house and the lawn or garden, three or four hemlocks, to ensure privacy, and against the hemlocks a cluster of white birches. Tall ferns grow excellently as neighbours to these shrubs, and the ground beneath them may very well be covered by the myrtle, which is the best substitute for the undergrowths of the woods.

On the eastern side the Japanese euonymus and the Andromedas are charming, with Thunberg's barberry, and a privet or two for height. Again ferns and myrtle for ground cover.

On the south and west set the flowering shrubs, with chrysanthemums set in clumps between them, and peonies wherever there is a place for one. Roses trained to the wall are best seen in such positions, and if the shrub bed be large enough to let some foxgloves or hollyhocks be set between the bushes, the effect will be pleasant. Cannas are very often planted close to the walls, and while they do not give the idea of permanence, which is one of the things best worth striving for in all planting, they are better than nothing.

In a world where change is a too insistent life-factor, I wish it could enter into the heart of every householder that it is his duty to plant as if change were the one thing that would never come, and that to make the outside of his house attractive is as much his duty as to pay his water-rates or poll-tax. What if the house is only a rented one? An ampelopsis may be pulled up in an afternoon's ramble, which will change the whole aspect of the porch against which it is set, and turn the house into a home. If I were a Society for the Improvement of Public Morals I should issue as Order No. 1, an edict compelling every citizen of the republic—without any of the exemptions of women and idiots which our polite laws sometimes make—to plant a tree or a shrub every year of their lives. If I were the Autocrat of all the Russias, a *ukase* should go forth that, under pain of banishment to some desert in which no scantiest herbage would grow, every second tree should be a pine: every third tree an oak, and no woman should be considered marriageable until she had six hemlocks and six birch-trees to her credit. Legacies from lost uncles in India should, moreover, be forfeited unless the family record in regard to orchards was quite clear.

I have not said a word about window boxes, which are often the only gardens possible to the cliff dwellers of modern cities; and yet no one can think better of them than I. Little restful oases to the tired eyes lifted toward them from the pavement; little playgrounds for imagination; little ports for gentle thoughts and memories for exiles borne like thistledown on the winds of fate, who would not see their tribe increase until there were no boxless windows in all the waste of brick and mortar!

The best boxes are those which hold many trailing and creeping plants. The worst ones, the impossible ones, the unpardonable ones, are those painted scarlet or green. I do not know why it has not been set down in the Acts of Congress that makers and vendors and buyers of certain paints should not be sentenced to whatever answers to the galleys in modern penology. The makers of iron urns and animals should be sentenced, likewise; but to-day my business is with window boxes, and the impossibility of having an artistic effect given them unless the box itself recede into its proper place by means of a coat of soft sage-colour or dull brown, or grey earthy colour, and so ordained to accompany the living greens for which the box is made.

It is hard to tell one whose soul longs for lilies that it will be wasted time and misemployed talent which tries to grow them in the window garden, but it is true, and he would do better to acknowledge his limitations and plant in the large white petunias which adapt themselves so admirably to the place the lilies scorn. White feverfews are good box-plants: so are the impatiens; so are single geraniums. Rose geraniums thrive well, so do the coleus, and the pretty Maurandyra. If a hanging basket or two be suspended above the box it is very easy to coax the trailers above and the climbers below to combine their attractions, and the effect is sure to be pretty. For northern boxes the Boston ferns, asparagus Sprengerii, the Tradescantias, and almost all of the begonias will be good. Tropaeolums make good boxes if nothing else be expected to share the soil and the water, and for a short-lived joy pansies will answer. This list of the plants which can be grown successfully in boxes includes almost evey available name. I would have been glad to make it fuller if I could truthfully have done so.

And I have said nothing at all about that very fascinating form of gardening known in rural or semi-rural communities as raising house plants. As the world grows sadly wiser in its own conceits, many gentle old habits are laid aside, or are left for a few quiet people here or there who have not forgotten the old ways. To make ready for the long winter indoors, during the long summer outdoors, is with them a lifelong practice, and not the gayest June parade of roses can make them forget the shelves set advantageously in a sheltered corner, where certain plants are carried over from season to season, and where fresh cuttings are making ready for winter bloom. Slips, the cuttings are called. To offer a slip is a token of the highest regard: to ask for one a sign of the closest intimacy, if, indeed, it be not an intrusion bordering on rudeness. To exchange slips is to enter into a solemn league and covenant, and to inquire after the welfare of these offshoots of one's own fuchsias is as much a part of good manners as to ask after Aunt Anne. There is, moreover, no better way to court a disfavour which may amount to social ostracism, than to neglect the cuttings once they have been accepted. Candid persons may declare their utter inability to make anything grow, and so escape with pitying incomprehension, but to take upon oneself the obligation a slip imposes, and then to fail!

I am sorry that I said I did not like red geraniums when I think how cheerfully they have smiled at me across the snow from many a cottage window! I wish I had left unwritten those ungracious lines about the coleus, when I remember into how many starved lives they bring the colour of the stained glass of old cathedrals as they spread their branches across the pane. The little crab-cactus that seemed such a bore—what gay little lamps he has lighted now; and as for the cyclamen (" with their mitrelike flowers they resemble an œcumenical council of fairy bishops," said Dean Hole), how could anyone begrudge the three years of waiting between seed and flower when once they lift up their lovely heads! The Chinese primrose and the *primula obconica* are good indoor flowers, and if there be no gas about the house, all of the begonias are interesting—now. I used to think them great bores! By December, however, if one have a fairly open mind, one has grown humble, and humility is so great a virtue that by its aid one may come, in time, to bow before an abutilon.

Calla lilies, impatiens, and Dutch bulbs, grown in pots or in water, as you will, belong to the indoor garden, but palms do not, nor crotons, nor Norfolk Island pines, nor carnations, nor roses, except a small pink one, and the old crimson Otaheit, nor most emphatically, india-rubber plants. These are either greenhouse things or decorative plants that can have nothing whatever in common with the tender old friends for the sake of whose green leaves and infrequent bloom so much care is lavished. How they are shielded from frosts and draughts, how they are sprayed and watered and turned sunward, how are all the pretty devices love can offer lavished upon them! The house plants always belong to a woman, and almost always to a woman who has known sorrow.

It is when the lamps are lighted that the indoor garden shows its most poetic side. Against walls and curtains they cast their shadows of waving frond, and swaying tendril, and wide leafage, a fantastic company to which guests might will be bidden as to a feast.

Where are they gone, the shadows that I used to know? Where is the old firelight, and the old lamplight which called them into life? Where are the eyes which once looked upon their beauty, and the voices which once praised their fitful loveliness? Shadows also? Or is there another World, where the Realities are, and is it I who am a shadow waiting to be born?

The best winter gardens at our command are those laid down on the lines dear to our ancestors of Colonial days. By what sense of fitness they chose the style of architecture best fitted to the uses of the States that were not but were to be, and the gardens best suited to the architecture, the climate, and what ought to be the dominant American ideal, I cannot tell, nor can I divest my mind of an earnest belief that much that was direct and honest and broad in the words and deeds of their day, and the day of the young republic, was learned in the stately box walks that led up to the statelier homes which the men of the eighteenth century loved. The aristocratic principle *noblesse oblige* is the insistent note in those houses and gardens, and for that reason they were the most perfect exemplification of the democratic ideal.

A man never plants a red-oak for himself. It is his hostage to a fortunate posterity, and a good deed done without thought of personal benefit. He does not set out his box, or laurel, or holly without thought of others. Every one he plants is a silent affirmation in his belief in many things—faith in the unseen Power which has directed all things from the beginning, and which will not fail in oversight of the tree; faith in the sun and rain, and all of the marvellous forces without which no smallest seed could germinate; faith that those who come after him will have his own need of shade and fuel and refreshment and beauty, and faith in the dignity and stability of his country. In a wide and deep sense, the *credo* of the tree planter includes much of the highest religion.

It is only when trees are bare that we can see how beautiful are these types of man, when stripped of the garments by which so many of their most distinctive characteristics are hidden. Were the leaves always here, we should know little of the structure of the trees themselves, and our acquaintance with them would be exactly as accurate as if we recognised our closest friends by certain of their coats or ribbons, and did not know them if they changed their fashion. Half of the beauty of the beech is gone when we cannot see the lichens painted on her grey bole, or the network of her delicate branchings. The rugged corrugations of the sassafras-trunks tell quite a different story from that of their leaves and fruits, and are wholly unlike the grey flakes which cover the hickories, and the rough sheathings of the oaks and walnuts. The shredded purple integuments of the wild cherries are not at all to be confounded with the uninteresting garb of maples, and lindens and ashes, and the sycamores have a world-old tale printed in their pale faces. One lady birch, like the pure goddess that she is, cares so little for her raiment that we can always have glimpses of the warm loveliness of her satin skin and the soft tremblings of her breath. Springing in clusters from old roots, white and slender, she carries us back to the old, old days and the old free forest life as no other tree can do, and we see her giving herself to the lost builder who formed from it the one perfect achievement of man—the canoe—that lay on the breast of forgotten waters

"Like a yellow leaf in autumn
Like a yellow water-lily."

Beech and birch—the one holding the pallid sunshine in her unfallen leaves, the other white and swaying—are the high lights of the winter-garden picture, which require other senses than were needed when leaves were green.

If I could have choice of but one thing to look at in December, it should be a hemlock-tree. It should have grown in a space large enough to let it do what it liked with its boughs; and toward the south there should be a slope beneath it, where some of the limbs might trail low for the snow to rest on, and for the wild things to creep under. I would not ask it to thread itself with cones. It would do that of itself, for pure love of the tiny drops which are the jewels of the cone-world.

After choice has been made of the conifers, and the box—the shrubs which bear persistent berries are most to be desired now: privet, Thunberg's barberry, black alder, and a few roses. In climates favourable to the hollies, there is no need to go further than their shining treasures, and where the English ivies will cling to wall and to tree trunk, knotting their own stems into little trunks, as age comes on, and spreading their thick clusters of green atop, no one need ask for more. And yet, these do not hold the snow as well as the old mock-oranges—whose brown calyces hold the cold white crystals in a thousand urns. Any shrub whose stems are flexible and much-branched is an invaluable asset when morning dawns after a stormy night.

There is a never-cloying pleasure in the buds in which next year's flowers are hibernating. The dogwood bears a great treasure of these, and there is much to think of in the way in which the magnolias hold up the furry tapers which are to flame out in white fire before April goes. Maples make no secret of their buds, which are ready for the first warm day in March, nor does the horse-chestnut deny what it means to do with its large pointed tips. The Andromeda is the most alluring of all winter-budded growths; and one of the jessamines is so full of heavenly innocence that three warm days will make her smile out, goldenly, as if indeed the winter were past and gone, and the time of singing birds had come. So in reality, in bud and berry or brown receptacle, we have always two joys with us—the promise of the year to come, and the reminders of the year that is gone and a beautiful and convincing argument for that unbrokenness of life which we call Immortality.

The sun of the Shortest Day has set. The old Earth, faithful and true, turns summerward once more. The Book of the White-paper Garden is full, and there must be new pages for new days. Thank God for the beautiful, beneficent planning which makes room for even the smallest seed, of living plant or of loving thought, and keeps safe and warm the germ which aspires!

As with the year, so with man. As he grows older his thoughts reach out to farther horizons, and the love which once burned in a single, central fire now broadens into a flame that would gladly envelop the whole world. He outgrows much, and into what remains of the youth behind him he reads far higher meanings as he advances toward the youth that lies before him. He loved a flower once—now he grows into conscious relation with the immeasurable truth, which is taught nowhere else so clearly as in a garden, that all he has had, all he has desired, of any good is his. Not to touch, perhaps, or to see, but to remember and to wait for, secure in the faith that the Paradise which lies just beyond Calvary needs every leaf and every blossom that ever cheered the longing soul on its pilgrimage thither.

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